SPORTS / A25
Cardinals nip Tigers, move to within a win of World Series title

BUSINESS/ B1
Imports jumped 15.3% in Aug. to P4.89B due to increased demand for RP electronics

WORLD / A21
Bush signs law to build wall along US-Mexican border

NEWS / A2
DOJ asks BIR to probe Mark Jimenez over P2.5-B Internet system he sold to PLDT

If he asks for money for a prayer, he's fake

By Christian V. Esguerra

HE WEARS A ROMAN collar, carries a Bible and offers to say a prayer or bless a departed loved one.

He speaks words of

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, October 28, 2006 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 322 P18

'Con-ass may succeed, but it will be bloody'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and TJ Burgonio

CHARTER CHANGE MAY STILL SUCCEED through the constituent assembly that the House of Representatives is planning to convene, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said yesterday.

She said that while the process would be "bloody," it could be defended in the Supreme Court and could be held after the May 2007 elections.

It's Palace vs 'The Firm'

"ALL TIME HIGH," is how President Arroyo describes Philippines-China relations during her speech before a group of Filipino and Chinese businessmen at the Xiangla Hotel, Xiamen City, Fujian. Ms Arroyo is on a 5-day visit to China.

SC vote on Cha-cha confirms falling out

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Armand N. Nocum

"THE FIRM" DOES NOT SEEM TO SEE EYE TO eye with its most important client, President Macapagal-Arroyo, on Charter change.

A Malacañang official, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject, said Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio T. Carpio's caustic opinion rejecting the people's initiative petition only showed that Ms Arroyo did not have the backing of her most trusted law firm as far as her goal of amending the Constitution was concerned.

Carpio, together with Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. and F. Arthur L. Villaraza, formed the Carpio Villaraza & Cruz (now known as Villaraza & Angangco) law firm in 1980. Its fortunes as one of the country's biggest law firms have been inextricably linked to the President and her husband, thereby earning the moniker "The Firm."

The President appointed Carpio to the high court on Oct. 22, 2001. He is among the 10 Arroyo appointees (including Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban) in the 15-man—the biggest number in any administration.

"He (Carpio) is the most fervent force against Charter change among the justices. We've always suspected The Firm to be against Charter change, and his vote confirms this," said the Malacañang official.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez appears to be also blaming The Firm for the killing of the people's initiative.

"I think there's a big law firm that is cheering ... that [it] defeated Malacañang," he told reporters.

Gonzalez did not name the firm, but in a subsequent interview with the Inquirer, he indirectly gave its identity away when he said the reasons why it worked to junk the initiative petitions was its failure to beat the rap.

IT'S PALACE A4

GMA to China: Make RP investment site

By Christine O. Avendaño

XIAMEN (via PLDT)—WITH A BIG delegation that included her Charter change (Cha-cha) allies and her in-laws as well, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday flew into China and urged Asia's largest economy to make the Philippines a "destination for greater investment."

Ms Arroyo described Philippine-Chinese relations as "at an all-time high" and made a pitch for China to invest in Philippine mining and infrastructure, among other areas.

Soon after her arrival, Ms Arroyo witnessed the signing of several agreements that aim to enhance trade and investment between the two countries.

"We look forward to the day when China substantially raises the level of investments to the Philippines," she said at a luncheon given in her honor by Chinese businessmen at the Xiangla Hotel. (*See related story on Page A8.*)

With a delegation that included a huge group of Chinese-Filipino businessmen, including Philippine Airlines owner Lucio Tan, the President arrived at 11 a.m. yesterday to warm greetings from Xiamen officials, who organized a "dragon dance" near where her chartered plane landed.

Meeting with a delegation from the 500-member Filipino community, Ms Arroyo noted that while there were only a small number of Filipinos in Xiamen, "you are highly regarded" by the Chinese because they were professionals.

GMA TO CHINA: A4

ALL'S WELL: that ends well. And the nursing board passers are exhilarated. After four months of waiting, they take their oath by batches at the PRC starting Friday.

Nurses wake at dawn to take oath, move on

By Laila B. Salaverria

LIZA BASTIDILLO, A 48-YEAR-old student, rose up well before dawn, left her Laguna home at 4:30 a.m. and arrived at the offices of the Professional Regulation Commission in Manila hours before the gates opened. She just wanted to make sure there would be no snags back to her taking the Florence Nightingale pledge.

Four months of anxiety and recriminations ended yesterday for Bastidillo and the thousands of other passers of the scandal-smeared nursing board examination.

Cheering, clapping and hugging each other, they finally took their oaths to become full-fledged members of the nursing profession.

The cheering inside the PRC auditorium hadn't died when Dante Arg, head of the

NURSES WAKE A6

Tessie Sy still on 'most powerful women' list

FILIPINO BUSINESSWOMAN Tessie Sy-Coson has again landed in Fortune Magazine's list of the 50 Most Powerful Women in International Business.

Sy-Coson, vice chair of SM Investment Corp. and eldest daughter of retail magnate Henry Sy, placed 46th in the 2006 Fortune list, retaining the ranking she had last year.

She is so far the only Filipina to make it to the Fortune list.

This is also the sixth year that Sy-Coson was named to the list which appeared in the magazine's Oct. 23, 2006 issue.

"I hope it will bring us more business," Sy-Coson said in reaction to her latest inclusion in the Fortune list.

Sy-Coson, the eldest daughter of retail tycoon Henry Sy, scored big this year with the opening of the Mall of Asia in Manila, one of the largest malls in the world," writes Fortune Magazine's Jenny Mero. "Four malls hit record numbers, which will surely boost revenues ($1 billion last year) at the holding company.

Sy-Coson's responsibility in the SM group, built by her father in 1958, covers a wide sector. She is also the vice chair of Equitable Banking Corp., the

TESSIE A6

FIERY END: Banned liquids confiscated from passengers explode, go up in smoke while being flattened. (Story on Page A6.)

Jollibee COO is Asia's top corporate citizen

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

HONG KONG—ERNESTO TANmantiong of fast-food giant Jollibee Foods Corp. has been awarded Asia's Corporate Citizen of the Year during the 5th CNBC Asia Business Leaders Awards held here late Thursday, in recognition of his sharing corporate success with the community.

Tanmantiong, Jollibee's executive vice president and chief operating officer, was cited for having translated profits into benefits for the community, specifically in the fields of education, environment and community development.

Tanmantiong was the lone Filipino in the elite group of top Asia

JOLLIBEE A6

US poll computers can be hacked, experts show

WASHINGTON—NEW ELECtronic voting machines to be used in the upcoming US legislative polls are raising concerns after several blunders that have severed memories of Florida's 2000 presidential election debacle.

Americans will vote in state and local elections on Nov 7 and for members of the US House of Representatives and Senate.

"Anything is possible," warned Kimball Brace, head of the political consulting firm US Election Data Services.

"We've got more than a third of the nation voting on something new this year and history has shown that the first time somebody uses a new piece of voting equipment, that's the time that they are going to have problems."

Brace said nearly 40 percent of voters on election day will be using paperless touch-screen machines that have raised concerns among many experts nationwide as they leave no paper trail and are vulnerable to hackers.

Their vulnerability was embarrassingly brought to light by Edward Felten, a professor of computer science at Princeton University in New Jersey, who demonstrated to Congress last month how he could hack into the machines and switch votes from one candidate to another.

Many US states tossed out their antiquated voting systems after the "hanging chads" confusion of the 2000 presidential election in Florida that spurred Congress to ban the use of punchboard ballots and prompted many states to adopt electronic voting.

Some 63 percent of voters are set to use new electronic voting machines during the Nov. 7 elections but enthusiasm for the new technology is low among voting officials nationwide because of a number of mishaps during recent primary elections.

US POLL A6

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Gonzalez goes after Jimenez

BIR ordered to probe trader for tax evasion

By Armand N. Nocum

"THE GOVERNMENT HAS TRAINED ITS GUNS ON" businessman Mark Jimenez, moving to have the former Manila representative investigated for possible tax evasion, for the source of his highly visible wealth and for going around with even more police escorts than the justice secretary.

In a letter to Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday asked the revenue agency to probe the repatriated P2.5-billion sale of Meridian Telekom to Philippine Long Distance Co. and Smart Communications in 2004.

Meridian used to be owned by the family of Jimenez, a convicted Freedom Joseph Estrada who once admirably described Jimenez as a "corporate genius."

According to Gonzalez, the inquiry should determine whether Jimenez paid the proper taxes when he sold Meridian Telekom, a provider of high-speed data and Internet services using satellite broadband technology, to Smart, a wholly owned subsidiary of PLDT.

"I am interested in the information as to whether or not in this transaction, all taxes due to the government have been paid, as well as the propriety of the transfer considering that... the signatory to the sale transaction was a certain Mylo Crespo Jimenez," Gonzalez said in his letter.

In an interview, Gonzalez said the sale of Meridian, the first local telecommunications firm to focus primarily on high-speed data and Internet services using satellite broadband technology, was consummated sometime in September 2004.

He said the purchase price was $45 million, or about P2.3 billion, to be given in seven installments.

Last week, the BIR chief also asked the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) to investigate the source of the money of Jimenez, whose real estate is Macro Group.

Gonzalez noted that Jimenez, who returned to the country on December 2005 after serving for two years in a US federal prison after being convicted of tax evasion, fraud and obstruction charges, has been throwing millions of pesos to various groups as donations.

He stressed that the legal threshold for Justice to initiate an investigation of any person maintaining bank accounts was only P500,000.

"I am ordering the Justice to investigate the source of the money of former Congressman Mark Jimenez. If he is throwing P5 million to P10 million somewhere else, we should know the source of his money," he said.

Jimenez earlier pledged P50 million to support the dislocated plan holders of the Pacific Plan pre-need firm organized into the Pacesetter Enrolling Parents (PEP).

In another letter to Philippine National Police Chief Director General Oscar Calderon, Gonzalez asked why Jimenez was recently seen in a convoy being escorted by six senior Inspector Eastern Police District (IDE) policemen.

This was on top of Jimenez's personal bodyguards who were all heavily armed, he said.

He reminded Calderon the chief of PNP that Cpl. Fidencio Lallana that the six former escorting Jimenez were on a routine inspection.

"I am the secretary of justice and I have only two policemen escorting. My son, Congressman Raul Gonzalez, Jr., does not even have a policeman escort, and yet

JIMENEZ

GONZALEZ

. . . He also bars Ocampo from leaving

By Michael Lim Ubac

AFTER LINKING MYSELF TO JIMENEZ, Rep. Satur Ocampo returned to Manila late Thursday only to have again the next day for another round of meetings in Japan.

But unknown to the globe-trotting militant leader, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez had quietly issued a hold-departure order against his latest trip.

Immigration authorities stopped him from boarding a Northwest Airlines flight for Japan at 6:40 a.m. yesterday.

Immigration officials said Ocampo was a "flight risk," but Gonzalez told reporters that the Bayan Muna party-list representative would be better off staying put as he would only continue to "attack" the Arroyo government in the international arena.

Ocampo, who has just returned from what he described as "a successful three-country European campaign tour," was set to take to Japan his antiwar, coup campaign against the Arroyo administration's extrajudicial killings and political persecution" which he said has claimed the lives of 114 Bayan Muna members since 2001.

His European trip from Oct. 13 to 20 had brought him to Geneva, Brussels and London where, he said, "receptive audiences" urged Interpol to tie call for international action against the wave of extrajudicial killings.

Ocampo challenged the legality of Gonzalez's hold-departure order and maintained that the justice secretary should apply he one from the courts.

"Here is a partial, brazen political intervention," he said as he unpacked his luggage in his Quezon City residence.

Gonzalez's resolve to enforce the hold-departure order will be tested again today in Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Cesar Drilon has issued a travel order to Ocampo who has again booked a flight for Japan early this morning.

Ocampo on Thursday issued an order to open court gaming Ocampo's petition to be allowed to travel abroad, but the verbal order was strongly ignored by the said bodies.

Ocampo said he was considering filing charges of harassment, violations of his constitutional right to travel, piece restraint and political persecution against Gonzalez and immigration officials.

He insisted that he was not a flight risk as he has left the country four times since rebellion charges were filed against him for his February failed coup and has always returned.

Ocampo said the break that he would be spending for his trip came from his savings and from "sponsors."

OCAMPO

Sandigan allows Erap to visit mom occasionally

By Norman Bordadora

THE SANDIGANBAYAN HAS ALLOWED DEposed Senior President Joseph Estrada to visit his ailing 102-year-old mother Mary Ewa occasionally.

The special division trying Estrada for plunder, however, required the former President to file a motion informing the court of the details of his visitation plans whenever he plans to leave his house in Tanay, Rizal where he is currently detained.

"[The] Court hereby grants the accused former President's prayer to visit his ailing mother but only on the specific date, time, place and condition as may be designated by the Court after an appropriate motion for such visit is filed by the accused-movant," the court said.

Estrada earlier asked the Sandiganbayan for permission to visit his mother every Friday until Sunday after the ex-president was informed by her mother's doctors that she has been bedridden with poor food intake.

The doctors added that her mental health has deteriorated and that there was an imminent rupture of the abdominal aneurysm "which invariably would be fatal."

"While in its comment, the prosecution does not interpose any objection to the accused leaving his detention cell, it however requires that the said motion be specific that a motorcade/discovery time there is a need for the accused to visit his mother," said the court.

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New storm coming, says Pagasa

ANOTHER TROPICAL CYCLONE, THE 14TH TO enter the country this year, is expected to make landfall early next week over the Sierra Madre Mountains and eye areas northern Luzon.

According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, the storm, locally named "Paeng," developed from an active low pressure area east of the Bicol Region and was spotted on Friday 720 kms east southeast of Casiguran. It was packing maximum winds of 55 kph near the center, and moving west northwest at 19 kph toward Pampanga.

No public storm signals have been raised but disaster coordinating councils concerned are advised to take appropriate actions, Pagasa said in its bulletin. Last month, Typhoon "Milenyo" (international name: Xangsane) left 250 people dead and missing as it ripped through Manila and neighboring provinces.

'Paeng' entry good news for Luzon farmers

MALOLOS CITY—METRO MANILA RESIdents may groan at news of a new typhoon approaching. But for officials of the National Irrigation Administration manning Central Luzon's vital Angat dam, it is a prayer answered.

Despite repeated bouts of recent flash floods in Metro Manila, not enough rain has fallen in the Central Luzon watershed area of Angat. This is the cause of the reported drop in the reservoir's water level, which is worrying officials of the National Irrigation Administration.

The reservoir, located in the boundary of Aurora and Quezon and Bulacan provinces, is the main source of potable water for Metro Manila households and business establishments, as well as the irrigation source for over 28,000 hectares (combined, remember) the country's main rice granary. The National Power Corporation also treats a hydroelectric station in Pantabangan, Bulacan.

Manuel Collado, chief of the National Irrigation Administration in Central Luzon, said the water level at the dam as of 3 p.m. Friday was 202.4 meters—seven meters below the 209-meter ideal level at the dam.

The recent typhoons, including the devastating "Milenyo," did not dump enough water on the watershed area to increase the dam's level. "Milenyo brought more wind than rain," said Collado.

Rodolfo Santos, chief of the provincial disaster coordinating council in Bulacan, described the water level at the dam as "abnormal." At this time of the year, the reservoir's water level should be between 209 and 200 meters, Santos added. On the same date last year, water level at the dam was 195.61 meters.

Earlier, officials of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System said they would start lessening the supply of water in several areas in Metro Manila and nearby areas due to the low water level at Angat reservoir. At least 46 cubic meters per second are withdrawn from Angat for Metro Manila's water supply.

Collado said there were instances in the past when the NIA suspended water delivery to the farms to meet Metro Manila's water needs. NIA needs to release 28 cubic meters per second for irrigation, he said.

Bienvenido Tacido, chief of the Bulacan agriculture office, is encouraging rice farmers to shift to alternative crops in the next few months due to the expected low supply of irrigation water from dangat reservoir.

The said information from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) showed that a dry spell due to 12 MMs will affect the country from January to February next year.

Rimaliza Ocejo and Carmelo Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon

It's Palace vs 'The Firm'

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pass of the Office of the Ombudsman.

He claimed that the firm had wanted to get a former member—Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon Victor Hernandez—appointed Ombudsman.

That post eventually went to Merceditas Gutierrez, who, in a recent interview with Inquirer editors and reporters, was openly critical of The Firm. She said it was behind many of the purported irregularities in the government.

Asked whether the high court's 12-year, strongly worded decision, as written by Carpio, would amount to The Firm declaring war on Malacañang, Gonzalez replied: "I suppose so. Maybe."

Stinging words

A top lawyer, who also asked not to be named, said legal circles had been abuzz with talk about a purported falling-out between the Arroyo and The Firm—some even named dates.

The lawyer said Carpio's vote on the initiative petition appeared to have bolstered the talk.

Michael Defensor, the President's chief of staff, refused to comment on speculation that it keyed the between her and The Firm.

But he disclosed that the President was "perplexed" by the action of some of the justices, especially her appointees, not because they objected to the people's initiative but because of the "stinging" words they used.

"If you read some of the opinions, you would think that those were written, not by [people] in the legal profession, but [people] who have expressed an to grind with the President," he said.

Defensor said it was but natural for Mr. Arroyo to take the matter personally because she had strongly endorsed the people's initiative that few handpicked justices later described not only as a usurpation but also "a grand deception."

"The President does not mind them disagreeing with her on some issue because they have to be independent. But she takes it badly when the criticism are too much," Defensor said, without naming names.

"She's really perplexed that those she picked for the position would turn out to have the harshest opinions," he said.

The Carpio-written decision said in part: "To allow this constitutionally infirm initiative, propelled by deceptively gathered signatures, to take back principles in the Constitution is to allow a desecration of [it]. To allow such alteration and desecration is to lose this court's creation of Eden."

It also said: "An initiative that gathers signatures from the people without first throwing to the people the full text of the proposed amendments is more like a deception, and one operates as a gigantic fraud on the people."

Reversing himself

Gonzalez took a swipe at Chief Justice Panganiban for purportedly voting to junk the initiative petition only "to project to the whole world that the Supreme Court is independent."

IN THE KNOW

VILLAMOR: Principal sponsor

CAMPO: Stinging words

CAMPO'S LAWSUIT: Campo changed his name to Villamor A. Campo to whom by founding partners Avelino Cruz Jr. and Salvador Enage, joined the Arroyo administration

"You first," has long and deep ties with the Macapagal and Arroyo families—ties that supposedly started in the 1960s when it counsel into the UP Building in Makati City, if IA shares in Concrete Aggregates, mother of President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

It still holds office there.

Sally Villamor, wife of the other founding partner, S. Arthur "Turche" Villamor, is a close friend of the Macapagals. In 2002, she was among the principal sponsors at the wedding of Mike Arroyo, the First Gentleman's elder son.

In 2003, Puerto Princesa received a principal sponsor at the wedding of the First Couple's other son, Dato.

The firm is believed to wield much influence with the President.

In 2001, Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Carpio and Cruz as Supreme Court associates barely a week after presidential legal counsel Silvestre Bello III resigned to become secretary.

At present, The Firm has more than 60 lawyers and more than 300 paralegal staff. **Lawrence Agcaoili, Inquirer Research**

In his separate concurring opinion, Panganiban said that the high court was at "the crossroads of history," that its decision would be talked about in history "either in shame or in pride," and that in this case, it decided to uphold its "independence, integrity, industry and intelligence."

Gonzalez said Panganiban "reversed himself" from his decision in the 1997 Santiago v. Comelec case where he voted along with the minority that a people's initiative was sufficient to effect changes to the Constitution.

"He went around 360 degrees ... We were hoping that maybe at least, he would abstain because he had already taken a (different) position ," Gonzalez said.

"To me, it's quite clear that the Supreme Court sees in a hurry to resolve this case. They are in a hurry that the issue will run out for the motion for reconsideration to be decided before Pengantihan comes [in December]," he said.

Calce and then some

Justice Carpio yesterday received a rare and glowing praise from groups opposed to Charter change—and something far less appealing from the initiative proponents.

Efren de Luna, secretary general of the Sigaw ng Bayan, called on Carpio to resign for his strongly worded decision on the initiative petition.

Yesterday Carpio should resign. His decision made it appear as if those who signed the petition had been duped and lied to," De Luna told reporters at the Ambassador Hotel forum.

De Luna said Sigaw members were sure that double-had been cast on the authenticity of the 6.3 million signatures gathered.

He said Sigaw planned to hold protest actions in Metro Manila, to be attended by the signatories, so that they would affirm their support for the people's initiative and show the votes behind the signatures.

Asked why it was only Carpio's head, and not also those of the seven concurring justices, that he was asking for, De Luna said Carpio was the ponente and the majority see who had formulated the idea that the signatures were not authentic.

"We saw that he was the one who signed [that] over the bad idea that the signatures were not real," De Luna said.

'Our own opinion'

But Ramon Casiño, secretary general of Sigaw member Agrarian Pilipino, said his group was not calling for Carpio's resignation.

"We have our own opinion. Our position is we respect the decision of Carpio. We are not calling on him to resign," Casiño said.

But he said Agrarian Pilipino, which is made up of Pampanga natives, would continue to push for Charter change.

"We will wait, we will try, We will go through the proper process to change the Constitution."

Casiño claimed that Agrarian Pilipino had paid for the advertisements in the media backing Charter change.

According to him, the group got the money from its members, who include businessmen. **With a report from Jaileh B. Salamero**

Cha-cha backer says Panganiban eyeing Senate

By Christine O. Avendaño

IGAMOS—CHIEF JUSTICE ARTEMIO PANganiban is running for senator in the May 2007 elections under the opposition banner, if Bantay Sunar Gen. Ben Ibrahim is to be believed.

Ibrahim, who is in this city as part of the official delegation accompanying President Macapagal-Arroyo in her trip to China, Africa and Europe, said Panganiban's purported candidacy was the talk going around the "bantay circle."

"They're saying that [Panganiban] wants to do a Fernan," he said, referring to the late Senate president and former chief justice.

After Fernan ordered an official junket, he sought and won a seat in the Senate and went on to head the chamber.

He then sought the presidency but eventually decided to run his vice president, and ended up losing to Joseph Estrada.

"We have heard that his [Panganiban's] nephew will [run], it will run for surprised if he will be picked up by the opposition," Ibrahim said.

Panganiban is set to retire in December. He drew the ire of proponents of the people's initiative to amend the Constitution—including the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) to submit. Resolution belongs—after he voted 8-7 with 0-7 on Wednesday to dismiss their petition.

So it said to have cast the swing vote that derailed the fate of the petition.

No way

Asked whether he thought Panganiban would be a "winnable" candidate, Ibrahim told the Chief Justice would lose.

"He will not win because do you think the 6.3 million people who signed our petition will vote for him? Of course not," he told reporters in Filipino.

Furthermore, local government units will "campaign against those who are against Charter change," Ibrahim said, adding:

"Even if we lose, I will not be surprised if the LGUs will actively campaign against him."

Ibrahim reiterated that Ulap was considering appealing the high court's decision to dismiss the petition, among others, "before" its announcement that the exercise to gather millions of signatures for the people's initiative was a grand deception."

"Of course we will respect and abide [by the decision], but it does not mean that we are barred from filing a [motion for reconsideration]," he said.

But should Ulap and Sigaw ng Bayan lose the case again, Ibrahim said, they would push for the third mode to amend the Charter—by way of a constitutional convention. (The second mode after the people's initiative is a constituent assembly.)

'Con-ass may succeed . . .

from page A1

Santiago supports the holding of a constituent assembly to amend the 1987 Constitution by a three-fourths vote of all the members of Congress voting jointly, provided that any member of senators take part in the process.

She said she and at least four other senators—Edgardo Angara, Juan Ponce Enrile, Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and Manuel "Lito" Lapid—were willing to participate in such an assembly.

But the majority of senators say there is no way the assembly can happen because, they say, the Charter provides that the two chambers vote separately, as in the passage of ordinary legislation.

The Senate wants to be abolished under the proposed unicameral-parliamentary system.

Sen. Franklin Drilon yesterday served notice that the Senate will question before the Supreme Court the Kilusang Pagbabago's pushing the way for the convening of a constituent assembly if it would be approved by the lower chamber in plenary.

"We, we will block it," Drilon, who is among those firmly opposing the Moderniza-backed move to amend the Charter, told the Senate. "We have a standing resolution that we must vote separately."

Early last month, the House committee on constitutional amendments passed Resolution No. 1109 seeking to convene Congress into a constituent assembly and proposing to shift the country to a federal form of government. It is a follow-up to Resolution No. 1020, which the House sent to the Senate in November 2005.

House leaders believe that the Constitution allows them to amend the Charter on their own so long as they use manner the required number of votes.

But the senators have disputed this view, and passed a resolution stating that any amendment in a constituent assembly would need their concurrence.

'Deliberately vague'

Santiago, a constant ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said the Constitution was "deliberately vague for oversight" on whether the two chambers had to vote jointly when seeking amendments. She said some parts of the Charter specified separate voting.

"Definitely, the proponents of a constituent assembly will argue that the Constitution does not say [the phrase] 'voting separately,'" she said, adding that "maybe the Supreme Court can be persuaded if the case is argued properly."

Santiago said the House would pass a resolution convening the constituent assembly and "inviting" the Senate to participate in it. She said this had to be done because the Senate would not approve the House concurrent resolution calling on the two chambers to act as a constituent assembly.

The assembly will be valid when it is "joined by any majority of senators," not necessarily all 23 of them, she said.

Tyranny of numbers

Santiago said the Senate could not prevent or censure her and others if she voted from taking part in the constituent assembly.

"Can the House employ its coercive tyranny of numbers? Can they punish us, to what measure, and by what sanction?" she said.

Santiago admitted that the constituent assembly would be "just as bloody" as the people's initiative that the Supreme Court threw out on Wednesday.

"It's even worse actually in a certain way, because we have no president at all to advise the Senate has the power to exercise veto power by its short inaction on a resolution of the House to convene a constituent assembly," she said.

Santiago said the assembly "would have to take place after" the May 2007 elections.

She remembered those who predicted it would have no chance under a new Congress, saying that while the Senate was dominated by the opposition or those critical of Malacañang, the situation could change if more administration-friendly senators were elected.

"So the administration will pull out all the stops to have its candidates elected," she said.

Santiago also said the defeat of the people's initiative in the high court did not preclude the President's political leadership.

"Unfortunately in our country, people do not vote on issues but on personalities," she said.

Back at high court

But first, Jaime Ascuyo, who had argued against the people's initiative in behalf of the Senate before the Supreme Court, predicted that the constituent assembly would eventually be questioned before the tribunal.

"Why will convene the constituent assembly and try to do it without the participation of the Senate, that will again get to the Supreme Court. It will inside both to the Supreme Court," he told reporters Thursday afternoon.

If and when the Senate decides to question the matter before the high court, it will again be backed by the advocacy group Diwa Pilipinas, which on Thursday also promised to block a Senate-less constituent assembly.

60,000 foreclosed homes to be sold by gov't

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE GOVERNMENT IS SELLING SOME 60,000 foreclosed housing units worth an estimated P6 billion through the building of a nearly-housing fair for employees of the government and the private sector.

President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro, who led the opening of the two-day housing auction in Makati City, said the sale would continue until April 2007 to give potential buyers more time to choose from the various (government) homes of government financial institutions. Simultaneous housing fairs were also being held in Cebu and Davao cities.

The President dropped by the Glorietta Mall in the morning to join De Castro in the televised "Tapatang Pilipino" forum in an open question-and-answer session before proceeding to the airport for her five-day official trip to China.

20 percent target

Jes Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), expressed confidence that his agency would be able to dispose of at least 20 percent of the houses by the end of the housing fair next year.

During the presentation, the President said she was pleased with HUDCC's decision to dispose of the idle houses at discounted rates as this would help generate income for the government and at the same time provide decent housing to employees.

De Castro said that most of the houses were seized over by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and Government financial institutions banks for their financial obligations.

The BSP he said, has increased its discount offer from 10 to 15 percent for cash buyers.

On the other hand, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has increased its discount on acquired units from 10 to 20 percent. It will also give five percent discount to cash buyers.

Higher discount

The Home Guaranty Corp. (HGC) is offering a higher discount of 20 percent from the original 10 percent, while the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) has increased its discount from 10 to 15 percent for all cash buyers.

De Castro said the Pag-Ibig Fund has also lowered its interest rate for housing loan at 10 percent on all units, and reduced the down payment from 10 percent to only five percent. It initially assigned interest rates of nine percent for housing units valued over P500,000 and six percent for units below this amount.

The National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. (NHMFC) also lowered its interest rate to six percent for all units at bank online, with payment terms of up to 25 years.

De Castro said up to 25 percent discount was offered by Land Bank of the Philippines to cash buyers.

Rare interest

De Castro said the last minute "improvements" to discounts were a response to the overwhelming interest showed by government employees to affordable housing deals.

"We have been receiving many inquiries even since we announced the housing fair, and we thought that we could convert some of these into actual purchases and achieve the objective of the program by offering even big-ger discounts and better interest rates," De Castro said.

He said the nationwide housing sale was initially open only to government employees, but the Social Security System (SSS) and the Pag-Ibig Fund also offered their foreclosed housing units for their respective members from the private sector.

De Castro estimated that more than 1,000 government employees took part in the housing fair on Saturday.

"But it supposed to be for government employees, but we decided to open it to the general public especially for low salaried workers," he said.

Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE would have approved. The Board of Nursing finally administers the oath to passers of the nursing board last June at the Professional Regulation Commission auditorium. EV CAMUYOT

Nurses wake at dawn to take oath: 'Now we can move on'

Front page of 1

Presidential Commission on Filipino Overseas Placido, injected some mirth.

In an interview with the Inquirer, Ang said that in his recent meetings with officials of the United States National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), they told him that if a medical board examination is given in the United States as what occurred during the exciting licensure examination here in June, they would have ordered a retake of the whole exam.

In fact, Ang said NCSBN president Keith Fields had told him that a nursing board exam in our ES state was also wracked by a leakage scandal until the NCSBN ordered a retake of the whole exam to solve the problem.

The NCSBN administers the US National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). Passing the NCLEX would qualify a Filipino nurse for jobs in US hospitals and health centers.

Around 80 percent of NCLEX examinees come from the Philippines.

Ang's remarks may well have sounded irrelevant in Redrolle and in Grupo San Diego, 28, an accountant's son and the topnotcher of the controversial June exam.

"I'm very, very happy because now we can move on," said San Diego, who was among the 5,000 new nurses to rank their oaths in batches at the PNC composed room the

"Our plans were disrupted during our frustrated be of waiting. At least, now we can make them happen," he said.

End of agony

San Diego dreams of someday working in a US hospital.

The young Pampanga said he would begin reviewing for the NCLEX but that before going abroad, he wanted to work for at least a year in a Philippine hospital.

"We are all very happy that finally their agony is over," said school dean Annelie Lim, who attended the oath-taking of 83 new nurses at St. Scholastica City.

First batch

Yesterday's first batch of oath-takers at the PRC office in Manila nurses their obligations in the nursing profession and its principles at the PRC auditorium at 8:30 a.m. The 29-minute ceremony included a prayer and a message from the Board of Nursing chair.

The integrity of the June exam came under a cloud after disclosures that questions to

BIR widens TIN probe to all LGUs

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE (BIR) widened its probe into the reported listing by local government units of employees without taxpayer identification numbers (TIN) to cover all regions of the country.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag yesterday ordered BIR regional directors to check the TIN of provincial, city and municipal employees after some employees of the Makati City government were allegedly found to have no TINs.

Initially, Buñag directed Makati BIR regional director Nestor Ajero to check the veracity of the report on the Makati City government. But the BIR chief later extended the order to cover 12 other regions in the hope of finding other local government employees without TIN.

The National Internal Revenue Code requires all persons employed, or seeking employment to secure TINs, which should register them as personal taxpayers. Employers of individuals have the duty to secure the TINs of their employees.

Buñag issued the order after Oscar Ilag, a former MMAO CEO, contended, accused Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay of harboring some 6,000 employees who have not secured a TIN from the BIR.

Ilag said the last that 6,000 employees in the Makati City payroll have not secured TIN notice of duty were "ghost employees" as claimed by former Makati Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado.

While the issuance of TIN by the BIR is free, it is required for employment in ensure that the employee is made to pay his income tax return (ITR), especially income tax.

"The TIN is an important requirement that enables the BIR to track down payment tax evaders in order to build up its revenue base," Buñag said.

He said that a city or municipal government that had not secured TINs for its employees would be liable under the law.

According to Ilag, the Makati city government had lost some P900 million a year or almost P5 billion over the last eight years for paying some 6,000 fictitious employees who have an average salary of P10,000 a month.

But Binay said the issuance of TIN to municipal employees was the bailiwick of the BIR, not the municipal government. Binay also urged that the national government were the concern of the BIR.

He stressed that the municipal government's concern was only to ensure that city hall employees pay local taxes.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, October 28, 2006
Simon and Jude, Apostles

1st Reading: Eph 2:19-22
Gospel: Luke 6:12-16

Jesus went out into the hillside to pray, spending the whole night in prayer with God. When day came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them whom he called apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James son of Alphaeus and Simon called the Zealot; Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who would be the traitor.

Commentary:

In Jesus we are no longer aliens, we are saints and citizens of the kingdom of God's peace and justice which knows no borders. We are a village and building that is secure on its foundations from the beginning, with Christ as the cornerstone. We grow together in God and God dwells in us in the Spirit. Jesus chose 12 from among his companions by the Jordan river in the Spirit and most of them contested the power with their blood as witness to Jesus' Word. But their work, and ours now, is to work to make the foundation sure: With hope grounded on the weak and the sick cured and saved for, and to build over the whole world in love of the one home in God here upon the earth, now.

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Jollibee COO is Asia's top corporate citizen

From page A1

Business leaders that included Masayuki Kimura of Tokyo Steel Manufacturing Co. Ltd. Data Innovation of the Week Nam Bin Han of Mentorship (China) Electronics Data Tahwa Management, Feida Bank of Indonesia Finance Ltd. Data Entrepreneur of the Year L Peng Pok Thang Ling of Combo Telecom System Holdings Hong Kong CEO of the Year and Japan's G. Mahendra of Mahindra & Mahindra, who got the top award of Asia Business Leader of the Year.

Jollibee's corporate social responsibility projects center on strengthening the positive values of children, who comprise the bulk of its customers. It has produced a series of animated commercials encouraging Filipino children to obey their parents, respect the Philippine flag, among others.

The company also financed the production of illustrated books for Grade 1-6 featuring its mascots—and developed its coordination with the Department of Education and distributed for free.

Early Christmas

The 40-year-old franchise chain made Tinatnan Ito its fried chicken, Filipino-style spaghetti, hamburgers with brunch bites, Bolabola Bowls and pinoy-flavored pie, also helps underprivileged children through its Always Joy Books program with top endorser Agot Isidoro.

Last year, it collected over one million toys from its 300 branches all over the Philippines which were, in turn, distributed to less fortunate children.

Jollibee is also involved in the shelter program through its tie-up with Gawad Kalinga, which puts up houses for the poor. It has built 50 houses in Sitio Tinatnagan, Las Piñas and is now building 100 houses in Southern Leyte, where residents lost their homes to landslides early this year.

Stringent screening

CNBC Asia Pacific managing director Jeremy Fisk said CNBC trusted the awards to produce "a platform where top Asian business leaders can meet, network and share valuable insights. To receive their respective companies, and have a direct impact on enhancing the corporate economy."

Fisk said the awardees were assessed after a long, stringent elimination process that started from over 15,000 companies across the region and then trimmed to the final six.

"I chose this award with my team, the customers and business partners," Tanunchong said as he accepted the award during the formal awards ceremony at the Conrad Hotel here. "May this inspire us to do even more."

Work with gov't

After the awards ceremony, Tanunchong told the Inquirer that he would expand Jollibee's social involvement by encouraging local government leaders to undergo training and seminars so they would better serve the people.

"We continue to look at how we can encourage our leaders to be more responsive to their constituents," Tanunchong said. "It is a full circle but we see that if we promote this, we can help our country."

He said that Jollibee's corporate social responsibility projects had no direct impact on its bottom line, but, it perceives because it was simply the right thing to do.

Most admired

"We have been blessed with the support of the Filipinos," Tanunchong said. "It is just right to act to lay and give back."

Jollibee also took the top spot in its overall ranking in the latest Philippine survey of Asia's 100 Most Admired Companies" conducted by the Wall Street Journal Asia.

This is the fifth consecutive time that the fast-food giant placed first in the annual survey of top companies in Asia.

Jollibee was also the top performer in "Innovative in Responding to Customer Needs." It bested top Philippine companies in the marketing, consumer-oriented food and beverage, broadcast and real estate development industries.

CNBC officials honor Antonio Tanunchong (second from right) during the 5th CNBC Business Leader Awards in Hong Kong.

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Tessie Sy still on 'most powerful women' list

From page A1

country's third largest bank, the president of SM Inc., which handles SM's retail businesses, and chairman of SM Prime Holdings, which owns and operates SM's supermalls.

Sy-Coson, a widow, is personally involved in selecting the items which land in SM department stores and takes a direct hand in the group's marketing campaigns.

Men noted that "with seven new malls and strong contingent from France and China, our international list shows that here, too, it opening up to women—that."

Top 3 women

The top three women on this year's Most Powerful Women list are running French conglomerate—all of them Fortune Global 500 corporations.

Topping the list is Pat Russo for Pfizer, who is riding away the week to be merged Alcatel-Lucent, which will be based in Paris, and will become one of the largest telecom companies in the world.

Anne Lauvergeon, who heads nuclear giant Areva, is ranked No. 2, while Rhoda Mkwe, recently appointed president of the French railway system SNCF, is No. 3.

Others in the Fortune's top 10 list include the Mothers Inside' Linda Cook, executive director of Gas and Power of Royal Dutch Shell; Britain's Marjorie Scardino, CEO of Pearson, which owns the Financial Times; China's Bo Guagua, chair of the Investment Group; Italy's Marina Berlusconi, chair of Fininvest, the media conglomerate founded by her father; the Internet Prime Minister of the Netherlands' Nancy McKinstry, chair and CEO of publishing and online company Wolters Kluwer; Spain's Ana Patricia Botín, executive chair of Banesto, and China's Mary Ma, CEO of Lenovo, the world's third largest computer company.

Year of woman CEO

Indra Nooyi, the Indian-born newly appointed CEO of Pepsi, on the other hand, topped the US List of Most Powerful Women, dealing the way in what editors call "The year of the woman CEO."

Others in the US list's top 10 include Anne Mulcahy, chair and CEO of Xerox; Meg Whitman, president and CEO of eBay; Pat Woertz, CEO and president of Archer Daniels Midland; Irene Rosenfeld, CEO of Kraft Foods; Ronnie Reimer, chair and CEO of Sara Lee; Glenda Whitney, chair of Harpo Inc.; Sally Kornbrekk, CFO and head of Strategy of Citigroup and Susan Arnold, vice chair, Beauty and Health of Procter and Gamble.

TESSIE SY-COSON. Sixth year on the Forbes list of most powerful women in business

If he asks for money for a prayer, he's fake

From page A1

counter, revive a guide or two and looks every inch a Roman Catholic priest—but is he really?

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has warned the public against enterprising individuals posing as priests to extract money from unwitting victims in connection on All Saints' Day (Nov. 1) and All Souls' Day (Nov. 2).

Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, CBCP spokesperson, said yesterday that the media reportedly seen common at this time of year when Filipinos nationally seek blessings for their dearly departed.

Here was the public will if a man reporting a Roman collar and saying a Bible is a fraud?

"It's really hard to tell by appearance alone," Quitorio said. He told reporters in a telephone interview. "You have to engage him in a conversation and another ask questions. If doesn't a predisposition for money, most likely, he's fake."

He said legitimate priests, even those from other Christian denominations, would never demand money after giving a blessing. At the very least, they would accept donations freely given by a person who had asked for prayers.

In the case of Catholic priests, he said they were often requested to recite the "requiem," which is the blessing of the tomb and prayer for the eternal repose of the soul.

If he stammers ...

"But it's better if people offer their fees for their departed loved ones," Quitorio said.

Another way to spot a pretender was to ask for the name of his diocese and the bishop in charge of it.

Quitorio said a real priest would know this information by heart. "If he stammers or if there's some hesitation before he responds, chances are, he's fake."

He said an unsuspecting individual should not just rely on a priest's identification card called "carabao" because it could also be counterfeited. Also, people did not usually ask to see it out of respect for the priest, he said.

The public can also check with the CBCP by calling its hotline at 404-2102, according to the monsignor.

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AFMIG Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon aims his pistol during a competition among the military top brass Friday to ensure their marksmanship skills remain sharp. AFP

Police go on full alert nationwide

By Alcuin Papa

POLICE WENT ON FULL ALERT NATION-wide yesterday for the traditional All Saints' Day celebration and President Macapagal-Arroyo's trip to China.

The full alert status took effect at 12 noon yesterday, after the President left for Beijing.

"We are on full alert first because it is standard operating procedure that we do so when the President is out of the country. Secondly, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day are coming and people are going to the provinces," said Philippine National Police Chief Director General Oscar Calderon.

The police has been on heightened alert since Oct. 9 following a series of bomb attacks by Abu Sayyaf in four weeks ago.

Calderon said a special police team would be sent to patrol and guard shopping malls and vital installations to thwart possible terrorist attacks.

The patrols are also for the purpose of preventing petty crimes as December is nearing, he said. The number of holdups and robberies typically increases in the run-up to the Christmas season.

"As we know, crime rises when Christmas is just around the corner. A lot of criminals will be trying to raise funds and they want to get easy money," Calderon said.

The PNP chief said intelligence agencies will continue to "pretend" reports of possible terrorist attacks.

The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said that starting on Saturday, 5,000 policemen would be deployed to mark Metro Manila's cemeteries.

Another 3,000 civilian volunteers will augment the police force in the connection, according to NCRPO chief Director Reynaldo Varilla.

In addition, some 500 Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) traffic aides will help to keep the smooth flow of traffic on streets leading to the cemeteries from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2.

The car number-coding scheme will be lifted on Wednesday, Nov. 1.

PNP spokesperson Sr. Supt. Samuel Ongcllan noted that Metro Manila police have been on full alert since last week because of the usual call to the Makati City Jail, where Hyatt terrorist Rizqy defied an interior department order suspending him for 60 days. The alert status was lowered last Tuesday after the Court of Appeals issued an injunction against the suspension.

A full alert means all members of the police force stay at their posts as all leaves with all leaves canceled. A heightened alert status means only half of the force is required to stay at their posts at all times.

The normal status is also reported to mine by alert level for All Souls' Day and All Saints' Day.

Esperon: 2 officers may be spared from court-martial

By Dona Pazathugan

MOST OR ONE TWO OF THE 26 army and marine officers linked to the February coup plot could be spared from court-martial, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. hinted yesterday.

Esperon said he would decide next month whether to convene a panel of general courts, even as his Staff Judge Advocate Command is for a review of the recommendations of a pre-trial investigative team.

"Within November we should be seeing a court-martial, if there will be a court-martial," he said, adding that he would not sacrifice "fairness and thoroughness" in his decision.

"I want to get the Staff Judge Advocate's report immediately and I'll see in it that I will read it as fast as I can so that I can decide as soon as possible," he said.

But even before the results of the review are in, the AFP chief declared that there may be some officers who might be cleared.

"Of the 38, there could be two or two or more who might not be included," Esperon told reporters on the sidelines of an army-sponsored shoot-fest among generals at Fort Bonifacio yesterday.

A three-man panel from the Judge Advocate General's Office (Jagol) led by its deputy chief Col. Al Parreno has found probable cause to charge the accused officers before a general court-martial.

Esperon received the 200-page pre-trial investigation report on Wednesday and promptly turned it over to his legal advisers.

He admitted he has just read the first three and the last three pages of the report, which included 1,000 pages of annexes.

The 38 officers whom the Jagol investigated for "attempting to seize or retake a motor" last February include former Army Scout Rangers commander Brig. Gen. Eduardo Ano and 29 other officers from the rank and former Marine commandant Col. Mel Sotto. Sotto, Col. Antonio Mihanda, Col. Ariel Querubin and 11 other Marine officers.

They also face charges of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman (Article of War 96) and conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline (AW 97).

"I must admit it's very difficult. You know, Gen. Miranda was my roommate for one year in the [Philippine Military] Academy. But first should be no reason at all why I cannot objectively do my duty as the commander," Esperon said.

The two generals belong to the PMA Class of 1973.

Last Wednesday, Esperon ordered the transfer of Querubin and the other accused Marine colonels to the Sangley Point naval base in Cavite, saying they could share cells there that "some elements" planned to spring them from the naval stuff house in Fort Bonifacio where they were being held.

But the Navy Flag Officer in Command, Vice Admiral Rogelio Bingcang, decided instead to transfer Querubin, Col. Orlando de Leon and Antonio Gatmaitan, and Lt. Col. Custodio Parcon, Armando Ibinet and Achilles Segismundo to the Marine detention center, also in Bonifacio-Fort Bonifacio.

Lightning 'paralyzes' Cebu, Negros

By Jhannex Magallucan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—A MAJOR BLACKOUT PLUNGED the islands of Cebu, Negros and Panay into darkness for almost two hours yesterday after power transmission lines were hit by lightning, causing heavy losses to businesses and disrupting operations in government offices.

But Pipl, information officer of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) in Cebu, said lightning struck in transmission lines 1 and 2 which connect Compostela town in northern Cebu to Banilad, Cebu City at 11:09 a.m., cutting off power supply from the National Power Corp.-Negrosa and Cebu.

Negros and Panay through the Leyte-Cebu Interconnection Operating Project.

Upil said a power outage in Bohol was not affected because its power was connected through the Leyte-Bohol Interconnection Project.

Transco is responsible to monitor its connection at 11:06 p.m., but the Visayan Electric Company (Veco), which distributes power to over 300,000 customers from San Fernando in the south and Liloan in the north including the cities of Cebu, Talisay, Mandaue and Lapulapu, was able to gradually energize in different substation at 11:56 a.m. until 1:17 p.m., according to Veco spokesperson Irby Natera.

Veco gets 225 megawatts of its 300 MW supply from Negrosa. The rest comes from other independent suppliers like the Toledo City Steam Corp. and Cebu Private Power Corp. (CPPC).

High court ruling consistent with SWS poll results

THE SOLIC. GEN. ERAL- or Station said the Supreme Court's main argument for rejecting the petition for a people's initiative was consistent with the results of a survey it conducted in June.

In rejecting the petition, the SC ruled that majority of the 6.3 million people who signed the signature sheets did not see the full text of the proposed charter before signing, and would not have known the effects of the proposed changes.

The high court said this evidences was "fatal" to the petition.

SWS president Mahar Mangahas said this dovetailed with the findings of a survey that the polling organization conducted last June in which "six out of 10 approached on a petition said they were not shown the amendments which they were asked to sign."

The survey conducted from June 23 to 28, asked respondents if they had been approached by any group "to sign a petition bearing some amendments to the Constitution," and that if they had been approached, if they were shown and allowed to read "the exact amendments they were" Sara Pedroso

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A FAMILY (at) dinner by candle light in the South Cemetery in Makati City. The local government's effort to move out the hundreds of people who live in the cemeteries in Metro Manila before All Souls' day, a day of remembrance for the dead when Catholics visit the graves of their relatives. —AUTOR

Get ready for security ch

By Rita T. Chikiamco

[illegible] will be high and 18-metre right for the "undas" or the observation of All Saints' Day on Nov. 1. An added security measure this year is the restriction on liquid and gel substances, Office of Transport Security (OTS) Director Cecilio Pedilla said.

The ban on liquids and gels, imposed in response to terrorist threats, is already being enforced in land, sea and air transportation, on top of other sensitive security procedures, such as the removal and screening of footwear, and the ban on pointed, blades and flammable items.

For those staying in Metro Manila, expect to see police and other uniformed units deployed at bus terminals and metro railway stations to help maintain order and check baggage. "But mostly, they will also be assisting security details in shopping malls.

Coast Guard spokesperson Lt. Cdr. Joseph Coyme said are essentially still for deployed/onboard search to help the shipping lines' own security personnel.

Transport and radio communication groups, barangay officials and their respective security teams will also be briefed at cemeteries, where all can escape security and recognized emergency and medical solutions will not be allowed entry.

The bosses has gathered travel tips from transportation and security experts to minimize the hassles of travelling through busy ports and terminals during "undas."

A MAN cuts the grass covering the tomb of a re for All Saints' Day.

At Manila North Cemetery, the living and dead share s

[illegible] Manila, the living must compete for space with the dead.

Fortunately for Hegenia Bernardino and hundreds of other clean dwellers who have moved into the largest cemetery in the country, the deceased don't complain.

"So far we have not seen any ghosts here," the soft-spoken Bernardino, 59, said with a chuckle. "I think that only happens in the movies. As the saying goes, we should fear not the dead but the living."

For years, Manila North Cemetery, a public graveyard in the center of the capital of 12 million people, has been a thriving community for those evicted from their homes or flocking from the provinces for better opportunities in the big city.

After being forced from their slum for beside the cemetery to make way for a new [illegible], Bernardino and her husband have converted her mother-in-law's mausoleum into a home for their seven sons, their wives and children.

Living conditions are basic but the residents manage some creature comforts. Clothes hang from lines strung among the makeshift shacks and television sets flicker to in a few houses with electricity stolen from nearby power lines.

The mainly Roman Catholic country now home to more than 86 million people, has the fastest population growth rate in Asia at 2.36 percent, or 5,400 babies born each day.

The incessant search for jobs and accompanying migration to cities has worsened problems of poverty, poor sanitation and urban decay.

A visit to the North Cemetery raises serious questions about government leaders' claim that the economy is ready for take-off.

The squatters try to make a living by painting and cleaning gravestones and tombs. Others, like Bernardino's husband and children, have found work outside the cemetery in casual labor.

Small children run through the rubble-filled lanes in bare feet, their faces and their bodies covered with dirt.

"They already know that they should not make human out of cemeteries," said Dr. Estrella Serrano, head of the Manila Health Department's preventable diseases division.

"It's dangerous to their health. The problem is they are being asked to leave but they keep coming back," he said.

The country's housing shortage is expected to worsen as the population continues to grow to a projected 112 million by 2010.

The high birth rate is tied to the strong influence of the Catholic Church, which frowns on the use of contraceptives such as condoms and birth control pills.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who survived an impeachment attempt last year and an alleged coup plot in February, relies on the support of the Church and shows no signs of reversing her emphasis on natural family planning over artificial methods.

ecks, land, air, sea passengers told

Travel Dos and Don'ts

For all modes of travel:

- Do reserve tickets ahead of your intended travel date.
- Do try to keep luggage to a minimum to cut down inspection time.
- Do follow restrictions on substances, pets and plants.
- Do arrive at bus, seaport or airport terminal ahead of estimated departure time.
- Do not leave your luggage, especially baby cases, unattended at terminals to avoid raising alarm.

For Land Travelers:

- Do be ready to unload bags for inspection.
- Don't bring along beans that are hard to open up for inspection.
- Do not bring in fresh meat and fish, especially for long trips. Keep dried meat and fish well packed.
- Do not bring pets and plants as much as possible. Make advance arrangements if they must be brought along.

For Sea Travelers:

- Do not bring in frankincense, fish and sea-side cultivated fruits. Bring well-packed dried or processed food instead.
- Do secure proper permits for plants and pets and keep them in travel cages.
- Do be ready to demonstrate safety of liquids, such as drinking of bottled water and spraying of perfumes.
- Do be ready to present documentation for rolling cargo such as cars and trucks, including official receipts.
- Don't bring firearms. For security purposes, do secure a mission order and permit to carry firearms.
- Do not bring LPG tanks, or at least make sure they are empty.

For Air Travelers:

- Do store liquids and gels such as drinks, perfume, aerosol lotion, toothpaste, and others in your check-in baggage to avoid confiscation.
- Do think electrical gadgets in luggage, cell phones, pagers and personal care appliances for security personnel that you have these with you before inspection.
- Do not try to bring flammable or pointed materials into the airplanes.
- Do not bring plants and pets whenever possible. If pets must, check the rules in advance with your airline.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Enough

EDITORIAL

EX-SENATE PRESIDENT JOVITO SALONGA MAY have given the apest characterization of the Supreme Court vote on the people's initiative petition. "It's a close but firm decision," he said on Thursday.

Yes it is, and the proponents of the failed bid would do well to keep that in mind and—to appropriate, semi-seriously, the Arroyo administration's own mantra—just "move on."

It certainly seems as though the Charter change campaign's supporter-in-chief is moving on. The day after the high court handed down its decision, President Maca-

pagal-Arroyo all but conceded that the people's initiative mode of changing the Constitution—at least in this particular form, at this particular time—was dead. "We call upon the people, especially the strong and committed supporters of the people's initiative, to join hands in supporting the close decision of the high court. This is democracy in action and we must uphold it," she said.

Game over? Not exactly. The administration has proven, since the President's crisis of legitimacy erupted last year, that it squarely belongs to the "watch-me-when-we-say-he's-what-we-do" school of politics. So the prudent thing for the public to do is to wait—vigilantly—and see—critically.

Indeed, the President has not said goodbye to the effort to change the Constitution. "The great idea of Charter reform lives on, and we must keep the fire burning," she also said the other day.

That combustible assertion forces us to look closely at the words she used in conceding defeat. Sure enough, we find that all the President said was that the close vote must be supported. Does support necessarily mean that the parties behind the people's initiative bid—Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, which are both closely identified with the administration—should drop the idea of filing a motion for reconsideration? Well said, sez. Once we hear a political personality argue that it is precisely because the parties respect the high court and the rule of law that they are seeking a reconsideration, we can be certain that the answer is no.

Already, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has voiced optimistic about a plan to appeal the decision. He also raised the possibility that administration forces would push through with the plan to effect constitutional change either through a constituent assembly or a constitutional convention.

"The President supports any mode that would lead to Charter change. The important thing is the objective. We have to see the timetable involved and study how these moves would be in relation to the constitutionally scheduled elections."

In other words, it is all a question of timing.

That, the possibility of filing a motion for reconsideration depends in large part on Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban's controversy schedule. The foolhardy plan to ram through a proposal to reconvene Congress as a constituent assembly also depends in large part on next year's election calendar.

To all this, we say: Enough already. We share the view of many legal observers, including former judge and current administration stalwart Sedfrey A. Ordoñez: Attempts to, yet again, run-run the referendum issue will run perilous. We also share the belief of many that the attempt to convene Congress as a constituent assembly, through a vote only of the House of Representatives, is our truly constitutionally infirm but also logistically untenable.

The most that administration supporters of Charter change can reasonably hope for is the chance to turn the May elections into a referendum—to determine whether the public, in fact, wants the Constitution changed in the first place.

Feeble response

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE UNITED STATES AND FOUR OTHER NATIONS—JAPAN, China, Russia and South Korea—have failed to announce specific measures to carry out economic sanctions unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council. That could spark concerns about whether the five nations will be able to take coordinated action against the reclusive state.

The five countries have been unanimously adamant in pressuring North Korea to endorse total and verifiable dismantling of its nuclear weapons. However, their inability to implement forceful and specific actions against Pyongyang means they have failed to send a strong message to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

Yomiuri Shimbun (Japan)

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The absent leader

SEPARATE OPINION

Raguiar A. Cruz

DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN 2004, he was everywhere—on television, over the radio, in the print media, political caravans, school programs, and of course the public rostrum. He was as good as already elected then and was heavily expected to top the list of winning senatorial candidates. There was none among his rivals to challenge him for the second prize, for which he had spent a not inconsiderable fortune and unsparing love and effort.

And he did win—over older and veteran national politicians, neophytes with little or no experience in government service, and even the presumptuous entertainers who wanted to cash in on their attractions in the less affluent areas of the country for public office. Those glittering stars, for all their artificial manufacturers, could not shine as brightly as he did in the eyes of the adoring voters. The results showed their confidence in their idol as the area leaders who would lead them from the doldrums of the tropics to an idealized Switzerland.

He was, after all, Mr. Midnight who observed the accolade the electorate gave him. He was the darling of the housewives for whose benefit he kept track of current prices of prime commodities from rice to fish and soya. The sister of a respected political family, he was also from a political party in office, and had previously served in the government like his forebears. With the added recommendation of being a bachelor, he was understandably the target of ambitious ladies going to sit with him some day in Malacañang. He was also a personable young man who combed his hair and wore neat, but not nearly expensive, clothes.

And so he entered office for the first time in the Senate, where his grandfather had served as its president before becoming President of the Philippines. Many saw the grandson as the positive and promising bearer of their illustrious name. Now then, he was already known for his predecessor's ornamental gifts, which were already shared by his own father before him. His only disadvantage—and it was not so devastating at the time—was that he belonged to the party of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, whose new title was already becoming questionable, that he would reduce her and her cronies from the growing disaffection of the people and offer them a new leadership under his standard-bearer.

But that was then, and here it is now! Where is the pioneering Mar Roxas, the topnotcher in the 2004 unprecedented election, in whom the electorate all over the land had great expectations?

It is surprising and terribly disappointing that since his impressive election victory Mar Roxas has hardly been heard from as a member of the Senate. Even with the threat of the abolition of the Senate by the administration's forces, he has not spoken a word in its defense. Where he was once garrulous during the campaign and was intentionally and strikingly willing to discuss public issues, particularly on economics and finances, he has now become unexplainably silent, not even to say "No comment." This is hardly understandable for a politician, particularly an elective politician, particularly if he has higher intentions for the future like to lose those incumbents in the palace of the people.

By contrast, his colleagues in the Upper House have projected themselves by their optimism on practically every issue, from Habeas to the Gani tapes, the increasing milkcontainer theft in the provinces, the amendment or revision of the Constitution, the conduct of the murderous violence against journalists, and other serious problems facing the nation. Even Angara Estrada has been conspicuously talkative and Lito Lapid is being pestered to challenge Joseph Estrada for the Makati mayoralty. There is also the new found joke about Bong Revilla introducing a bill punishing suicide bombers with lethal injection. But there is hardly any news about or from the formerly high-profile Mar Roxas, who has become like Achilles sulking in his tent.

I may have myself to blame, paying attention to other news events, but I have to say that Mar Roxas has not involved himself in the discussion or solution of the various public issues requiring his attention as a member of the Senate, except for his "parallel importation" of cheaper medicines. For his family reminds me of a similar case of Senator Domingo Romauldez when he was running for re-election in 2001.

I observed then that Romauldez was not entitled to remain in the Senate because of his terrible performance during the term he wanted to renew. In answer to the charges, his staff and his wife sent me separate but similar letters saying that while Romauldez was not active in the debates in the Senate, he was nevertheless busy with committee work. They both knocked his bill he had promoted (at the rate of one for each year) that I can't remember now if he had formally sponsored them or if they were passed as well.

I hope all my disappointments about Manuel A. Roxas II are not well-founded. But I am still curious about his reticence on the significant problems facing the country today that I feel he can help much to resolving as a responsible and perceptive member of the Senate.

The Carpio decision vs the Puno dissent

GET REAL

Sedfrey Ordoñez Hontanosas

RULING THE SUPREME COURT DECISION penned by Justice Antonio Carpio, as well as the separate opinions of 11 other justices (five concurring, six dissenting) is well worth the exercise. I must confess though that I spent most of that effort on the decision of Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban (which I hope to write about in another column), and the dissenting opinion of Justice Reynato Puno. Lower Court was he, but in paraphrase a popular quote, the issues involved are too important to be left solely to lawyers. And it is my contention that the ability to read and understand the English language is (or should be) a sufficient condition for appreciating what is going on. Besides, a non-lawyer's perspective can sometimes be even helpful—a case in point was a child who pointed out that the emperor had no clothes.

One of the things that this child (as far as legal matters are concerned, please call me Englishtrained) found really puzzling, was that, While Justice Carpio took great pains—devoting 30 out of the 40-page "Ruling of the Court" portion of the decision—to discuss the majority ruling that the Lambino initiative does not comply with Sec. 2, Article XVII of the Constitution (this section is the "the only mode or amendment" provision that allows a people's initiative to propose amendments to the Constitution," he said), Justice Puno's dissent did not touch on it at all. More importantly, at least to me, Justice Puno did not refute the Carpio arguments.

Inasmuch, Carpio, quoting chapter and verse from the proceedings of the 1986 Constitutional Commission and from American jurisprudence (the concept of people's initiative was directly borrowed from the United States), made the point that "unconditional & liberally proposed by the people through initiative upon a petition of (four-fifths) of the provision—period" only if the people sign on a petition that contains the full text of the proposed amendments." The full text may be written on the face of the petition or attached to it—and if so attached, the petition must state the fact of such attachment.

What is the rationale for this requirement? From various US decisions:

"A signature upon request would be meaningless if the person supplying the signature has not first seen what it is that he or she is signing".

"The purpose of the full text requirement is to provide sufficient information so that registered voters can intelligently evaluate whether to sign the initiative petition."

"An extensive signer must be informed at the time of signing of the nature and effect of that which is proposed," and failure to do so is "deceptive and misleading" which renders the initiative void.

Carpio drew painstakingly seven uses the words "full text" in quotations of Raul Lambino himself, and came to "the inescapable conclusion that the Lambino Group failed to show to the 6.3 million signatories the full text of the proposed changes," which "constitutes fatal." Carpio also listed some of the proposed changes—such as the lifting of term limits, and the fact that the members of the interim Parliament was to determine the expiration of their own term of office, as well as the fact that the interim Parliament was to convene within 45 days of the ratification of the proposed changes (to propose further amendments or revisions to the Constitution—whose nature and effect the signatories could not have known). The Carpio decision proceeded to show that "All, Lambino and his group deceived the 6.3 million signatories, and even the entire nation."

And that isn't all. Carpio pointed out that the Transitory Provision convening the interim Parliament within 45 days to propose further changes to the constitution was totally unrelated to the draft from a bicameral presidential to a unicameral parliamentary system. But he called "appalling" (the deliberate intermingling of issues to increase the likelihood of an initiative's passage), the effect of which, in American jurisprudence, is to nullify the entire proposition, not only the unrelated subject matter. Carpio further pointed out that the section on Transitory Provisions discriminates against the outsiders, in fact that the 6.3 million voters could not have known.

Given all these sins of omission and commission, Carpio concluded that the Lambino group's initiative was void and unconstitutional.

Now back to the Puno dissent. I didn't see anything in the Puno opinion that took exception to or was apart the Carpio ruling on the above issue. Which, to my unlettered legal mind, must mean that Puno did not disagree, but if he did not disagree, how could he then say that those 6 million signatures, solicited under false pretenses, reflected the sovereign will of the people? How could he consider those signatures the people's votes? A leap of logic?

To quote Puno: "Let them who will diminish or destroy the sovereign right of the people to decide be warned. Let not their sovereignty be diminished by those who belittle their brains to comprehend changes in the Constitution or if the people themselves are not the creator and author of our Constitution. Let not their sovereignty be destroyed by the shamans of manipulation who misrepresent themselves as the spokesmen of the people." I totally agree. Except that Puno's "them" seems to refer not to the misguided changes in the Constitution or the Carpio ruling, did the deceptions and manipulations), but to the other groups in opposition of the Lambino petition.

Go figure.

'Extremely strong and condemnatory language'

THE VOTING IN THE RECENT SUPREME COURT salary shakeup came down the people's insistence was immediately done. Even in the morning of Oct. 10, the people wanted to hand it a piece in no less a would go. It was the kind of decision that would have gone online win, and there were money and persuasive arguments on both sides. Even the justices themselves, in the final decision, [illegible] who cast the swing vote to break the 7-7 deadlock.

* * *

Many surprised many people, including—again according to reporter—former Manila Times publisher Amelito Mataboni, was the unanimously hasn't issue of the majority decision penned by Justice Antonio Carpio. At lunch in the Supreme Court, Mataboni told Inquirer colleagues who is himself lawyer for clothing tax czar Willard Munoz, noted the "extremely strong and condemnatory language." Wow! Mataboni, I think, made a good point. Strong indeed.

I myself was appalled at the tone. After 20 combined years of column writing, I may claim to have read unanimously a good number of Supreme Court decisions. I thought I was well prepared for the sweeping accusations the majority decision drilled out against the legislative proponents. In a democracy, we all value the role of the media in keeping the public informed. We are for the motion, and we respect the high tribunal's decision. But the kind of accusations Justice Carpio made were, as Mataboni quite rightly characterized, "outrageous. Grave libel."

Since last Wednesday, the columnist has been going to get mysterious about the decision. Some labeled the Court, but others were quite upset with the tone of the [illegible] majority opinion. The latter group included President Benigno Aquino, who labeled the "recklessness, poisonous and outrage" of all those who worked hard to pass the bill. Even the mainstream Catholic Church, who had time to read either the news account or the decision itself, were quite upset about the scathing tone Carpio took in issuing up the temporary relief of Royal, partner and the Board of Local Auditors of the Philippines.

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cabanayan

returned to sweeping phrases such as "grand deception," "blatant disregard of the law," and "through false pretenses." Our lawyers even wanted the language "treason." Ten to themselves, who made the Lords more overconcentrating into that law that everyone knew was quite close to the administration and benefited from it immensely. Doubtless many will remind his unbending new independence. But the tone!

* * *

Some commentators noted that Carpio didn't hold back to qualify that some expressions would have been labelled, or that some were motions [illegible] could have indeed resorted to libel. Maybe. How all, when you're talking about nearly 80 million voters—and counting—it's easy to see that some of them could be labelled in this country where the birds and the bees have been known to sue. But the process is termed to be details as "grand deception" or "grand." Those who were [illegible] regularly that he studied and we find the 1.7 million Strong Ulap, who manned the main thanks of the signature campaign all come the reason to. The local officials are said to be the ones who have as being pictured as "deceivers," "inept and naive, perhaps some are, but willful deceivers?

* * *

Inherent supporters find Carpio's sweeping condemnation of the opposed protest quite unfair. They say that, in fact, the opposition united Ulpan/Ulap people were there. Including going door-to-door, as in Makati. Citizens also have and a few other places, the opposition raised such a controversy that the signature campaign got bogged down for weeks. In, it would have been extremely difficult to weaker around with these signatures challenged.

* * *

I share the sentiment of those who say that, perhaps, the people's initiative should be the first Congress measure. Maybe it is not a way to amend the Constitution, and keep it just for recalling local officials. This is because the Court seems bent on making impossible for people's initiative to work. For instance, the high court decision keeps insisting that each of the 6.3 million verified signatories should have had the many pages of the draft Constitution attached to the signature sheets. It shall, as he or "refers to the [illegible] implementation on people's initiative" such as those issued by the Supreme Court of Massachusetts and the Court of Appeals of Oregon. But in the world's superpowers, they have the initiative and it works. What's wrong with the Philippines? Maybe it's the [illegible] constitutional provisions that refer to the nonexistent bicameral of Aquino or Quirino age, it. Or is [illegible] handcuffs of a politician death sharks?

* * *

The Court conveniently forgot that from the time this requirement was set down in RA 6735, a mind-numbing [illegible] of technology has taken many months, hyper-Ulap and older. TV and local development in the towns and cities, as well as standard [illegible] installation and [illegible] circuits, it is easy to check people regarding [illegible] Ulap. Organizations such as Namfrel and [illegible] handicapped by distance in the provinces, and have no backing nationwide. Could Namfrel and I, for example, also [illegible] some of the signatures and [illegible] the [illegible] of what is listed from Bohol to Sulu and Basilan.

The majority of these 6.3 million signatures was assisted wholesale and because a very small is the Supreme Court decision. Justice Bersamin that the Court [illegible] Super-Ulap's plea—which was also the stand of the seven justices in the minority—to remand the case to the Commission so that the poll body could study the petition and fix all.

Much of this is due to the work of blasted Solicitor, who plays "Yaya" Sarmiento with deadpan efficiency and crystal's unamused emotion. Also noteworthy: Are the performances of the supporting cast by Jun Sabayton's brother's mentions. The banter as the candy, self-inflicted Baby, and Bridal Uncle as Lonzie, the "happiness" maid.

"DATE Yaya" is directed by Dodo Dayao and was its, a still. Incorrect commercial director whose first feature length comes this is. His co-director is also the screenwriter, Jerome Velasco, who wrote as script producer for Daniel.

The film's premise is simple: Despite the urge to Gay Mother, the independent film competitions, and the prospect that Daniel have chosen to one of the finalists young boy Dimling "Alfonso" Bay, Bea Alonzo, Nino "Chicken" Muhlach, and the Pinoy's Next Top Model [illegible] Yaya Sarmiento decided to stay put and [illegible] a star-worth advancing in. "Let's just do this," the female hero, and "because we had such a long-standing relationship with her, we decided to [illegible] her [illegible]."

Yaya, Yaya," says Nelson, a friend to put on her own "Yaya, Yaya, who has been with her since her daughter Louise, now 11, was but a five-year-old. "Yaya, Yaya," he says, "should [illegible] her boyfriend," Nelson continues, the male "Yaya" a single mother because Maricris daughter has a friend who is the daughter of yours.

Yaya's supporters and counselors. "Sing me [illegible] about me," she says, "and [illegible] without you can count," is how Maricris describes Nonna and Tess, and perhaps the joys of every young mother's dilemma.

In my role as a motley lawyer (a counsel) in search of yours, I found dream of me who would not only tried my children on how to change their nappies without complaint, but also really love them, or at least talk for them the way they would [illegible] to me. Yaya is the kind of [illegible] Yaya, Yaya" is a tribute to all the yayas who left jammies' cheek-smiling with their parents, but still came. This tribute is my way of thanking all the yayas who came [illegible] my friends' kids and [illegible] my friends' children, all [illegible] recovery the load.

'Yaya' stories

At Large

Rina Jimenez-David

"Yaya Pa," she answered when I pointed to one cook. "Yaya Herna," she replied when I pointed to her caregiver. And when I pointed to myself, asking "Who am I?" "Yaya Mommy," she piped up happily.

* * *

We love them, we treasure them, we thank them—but what we find a hard and boring one, but we also sometimes resent them, or want to treat but wish our others are fired one a year's but when our children are [illegible] to [illegible].

And we never enjoy expenses, delivery boy, security guard or boyfriend from home who calls a yaya away from us just when our love [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible].

And now Ginkel Pictures has just made a movie about a yaya.

"Yaya Yaya" is not the first Filipino movie with a yaya as the main character. In fact it is one of the very few films that depict a yaya, and the relationship between her and her ward and the rest of the family, with realism and complexity.

The movie has all the elements of a soap opera: a single mother forced to leave her ever child behind to earn a wage; a daughter raging with her mother's absence; a couple whose work takes their every free hour; the long stretches; a girl who looks to her yaya for the love and attention she lacks from her parents; moody classmates, even a grandmother who looks down on those less fortunate than her.

But what separates these with those many dramas is we just to [illegible] them out but into [illegible] directions. Many times, "Inang Yaya" steps dangerously close to melodrama but manages to skim the pitfalls of excess.

* * *

There's nothing wrong with wanting the best for our own children; it would be unnatural to wish otherwise. But the more we upgrade our skills, turn our basic necessities into status symbols, spare a thought for the millions of children whose fingers will never touch a keyboard, lick who will be lucky enough to learn to [illegible] and [illegible].

Dec. 10 was Human Rights Day, an occasion to remember the rights often invisible to those people around the world and to remind ourselves that after decades of decline, that number has actually been growing by millions each year since the mid-1990s. Hunger still kills more people than AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined. In the 21st century, this is simply unacceptable.

We can make a difference. There is more than enough food in this world. For example, in Asia, over the population's nutritional requirements for more than a year would be sufficient to feed all the people who are currently undernourished in Ethiopia, in France, the "fifth" could feed the hungry of the Democratic Republic of Congo, while in the United States it would cover all the hungry in Africa.

Official development assistance has been cut by more than 20 percent in real terms over the [illegible] billion. We can afford to help, but we need to develop a food-first policy. It is by no means the slowest until hunger and malnutrition are laid to rest. And one way to start would be to prevent hunger from being used as a weapon.

So this year, let us work together to help aid hunger for the children, through simple measures such as mothers and child health and maintain pregnancy, and school meals to boost enrollment and attendance. With all the challenges those kids have to face, it is unconscionable to ask them and their own children to go off to an empty tum.

Jaime Morfe is executive director of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

Leveling the playing field for 400 million children

Commentary

James Morris

Hunger still kills more people than AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined. In the 21st century, this is simply unacceptable

Prosperity theology

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

Win for world community

LETTERS

ON SEPT. 15, THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL made a unanimous decision to step up its efforts to ease the suffering of the people of Darfur, Sudan[1]—a vast, 339-4 so include the military relief warrant, in its formal speech, to widely known, Britain has shown unwavering condemnation for devastating hundreds of political opponents, including Janjaweed militias and Global Peace Force Incentive hang fire (the militia who have been tasked house since its now of the past 17 years).

As expected, the Sudanese military joined their arms militias with carried skills in fabricating lies, because the cup spectator the double pact simply cannot tolerate the international community to believe that this genocide in Sudanese force commander existence.

The people of Darrus and the international community have all the incentive to celebrate because finally the UN's most powerful organ has taken notice of the 6-legged cognac in Kampuchea—a region that rapes as even women and children in some workers.

Immediately after Sept. 15, the janjaweed struck. A three-car convoy of aid workers was ambushed. Posing as political prisoners, Min Ko Naing, Min Zeya, Ba Fu Gyi, Htin Kyaw and Prone Chit were removed by the military's goons in their homes and they have not been seen since.

The junta, not to be accused the dictatorial activities, all of whom are members of the 60 Generation Students group, of creating "instability and unrest," and of having Kuku with rolled-up curtains. The arrests of five activists directly from the June historical commentary. As of this morning, the five are still under detention with no trial being set to prove their innocence. But wonder not, for Burmese here is no rule of law. The law exists only in the hands of those who intend to manipulate it. In Burma, don't expect justice, because the junta acts as the sole legislature, executive and judge—and executioner—all at the same time.

Indeed, Burma's inclusion in the council's agenda is a feather won for the international community. It offers a broader space for a democratization process in never inside Burma. But as the ruling junta continues to violate the rights of its citizens, the rest of the UN security council should not be frustrated only as Burma's inclusion is an exception of work. Such inclusion would become meaningless if the council would not adopt a substantial and binding resolution that is able to staunchly halt the political atrocities against all opposition groups and activists inside Burma.

—ALEXEI O. ARCLAY JR.,
executive director,
Initiative for International Dialogue
(IID) and convener, Free Burma
Coalition-Philippines (FBC-Phils.),
27 Galaxy St., GSIS Heights,
Marina, Davao City

Review the President's power to suspend

THE ILLEGAL SUSPENSION OF MAYOR Alfonso Ajuste Bicol comes some policy questions:

1. Is there a need to criminalize the discretionary rules governing local officials in proper and proactive cases under the concept of local autonomy?

At present, a local government official can be placed under two kinds of suspension, preventive (summary) and punitive. Both can be imposed by the Ombudsman, the Office of the President, the Department of Interior and Local Government, or a higher local government—depending on the applicable authority. The range of the many sources of disciplinary authority weakens local autonomy. The range of the many sources of disciplinary authority weakens local autonomy as local officials are open to too much interference.

There is therefore a need to review the system of disciplining local officials.

2. Should the President be allowed to summarily suspend a leader of the political opposition?

The suspension order against Bicol shows that preventive suspension can be used as a weapon for vocally partisan purposes by a vengeful and endangering President.

The power of the President to prevent truly corrupt local officials should be limited as those belonging to his/her own party.

This does not invite opposition officials can never be suspended. They may be subjected, only to punitive suspension, that is, only after investigation and hearing.

Suspension as a penalty is a drastic measure it can be appealed and, hence, deferred, unlike in case of preventive suspension which is effective immediately upon issuance.

3. Should a case lawyer be allowed to head the DILG?

Secretary Ronaldo Puno defended the appointment of Ajuste by saying that the evidence required to suspend is strong. There are no lawyers, Puno should have known about the basic and well-known legal doctrine that "he who alleges something has the burden of proving it."

Malacañang Palace alleged the existence of "ghost employees" in Bicol City Hall, without naming any one of them. Is there a suggestion already "ghost employees of guilt"?

Malacañang Palace has suspended and punished individuals without following due process.

Moreover, requests and proposals that are approved by the administrative or executive branch of government are the same requests or proposals that are disapproved by the legislative branch of government.

In Cadiz, Negros Occidental, we have witnessing an increase of number workers. The problem is that the PCOA does not make reimbursement for travel duties as required for any government fund that is willing from the Commission on Audit (City entire this in her article).

Finally, Cruz writes that "the DOJ Atty. suggested" Ex Santana in the case." The word "suggested" is in question marks, putting some doubt on the word. Well, if PGO DOJ Sec. Gonzalez's thesis this proposal [that P200,000 for a Senator's Prize which Cruz fails to mention] does not qualify as legitimate suggestion, then I don't know what does.

I agreed to the phone interviews under Cruz to shed some light on the "suggested request." I should have known that it would be difficult to get a fair deal when dealing the issue is an "interested" reporter.

—CLAUDE KLOH DO, SEVERO B. [illegible],
head, PCOA Clarence Committee

I believe that I never she wrote or else truly and in fairly as possible.

I called up Mr. Bo Manalo to get the side of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. I used quotation marks on the phrase "Santana request" and she used "suggested" merely to point out that this was exactly the way Bo Manalo described Ex Gaanan's request for subsidy and the financial help that the NCCA had extended to the filmmaker at the time.

—MARINELA C. CRUZ,
PDI reporter

It's time to close the Manila Zoo

WE AT PETA ASIA-PACIFIC AGREE WITH THE Biological Society of the Philippines that conditions at the Manila Zoo are deplorable. (PDI, 10/22/06) Animals are neglected, the zoo is still a filthy and no effort is being made to improve these conditions.

But instead of trying to bring back the Manila Zoo to its glory days, the best solution is to close it down. For years, officials have promised cosmetic improvements, but zoos look to the zoo—where malnourished animals are being kept in cramped, dirty cages with no space to roam—and you'll know that nothing has been done. It is heartbreaking that we let the situation worsen.

We recently got reports that in December, the zoo will be bringing in three giraffes from Cobiah Island in Palawan. It would be a shame to bring more animals into this deplorable situation when there are already many animals who are suffering. Please, no more animals into this deplorable environment.

We've already spoken our minds about bringing new animals in conditions while the animals suffer. Time is up. It is now time to close down the zoo for good.

—CHRIS BAKER,
director, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) Asia-Pacific,
[illegible]@petaasiapacific.org

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INQUIRER Visayas

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Banner Chief Rdvalyn L. Benedicto

Loans improve lives of Negros poor

By Carla P. Gomez
Bacolod City

WHAT HAVE A battered wife and a female farm worker in common? They both overcame adversity through the help of a project patterned after the Grameen Bank.

Virgie Herrero-Bardo, 31, and Emma Morales, 43, were living in pawong until they received Project Dungganon's loan facility.

Virgie and Emma are just two of the thousands of women entries produced through Project Dungganon, started in 1989 in Negros Occidental by the Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation Inc. (NWTF), thanks to the vision of Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus and the Negrenses who replicated it in this part of the world.

Awardees

The two are also Citibank's micro-entrepreneur of the year national awardees. Virgie won her award in 2005 and Emma in 2006.

Virgie was a battered wife and a jobless mother of four when her husband left her in 1987. Virgie, who lives in Bago City 12 km south of here, said her husband maltreated her when he got drunk. When her husband went to Isabela to work as a carpenter, he did not send her any money. She later married Abelardo Galleto, 38, a pedia victim who was unable to earn a living.

Virgie recalled that they lived in a small shanty built over an irrigation canal in Binitayan Mc.Leigh, Bago City.

With very little capital, Virgie struggled as a fish vendor until the board of Project Dungganon in 2000 and joined the group. After attending seminars, Virgie availed of a P3,000 loan. With her business thriving, she took out more loans to expand small convenience store and buy a hand tractor that she rented out.

Today, she owns seven hand tractors and two rice threshers for renting, a house and lot and a 1.5-hectare farm.

She also owns a sari-sari store, tricycle, sees to children's grocery goods they sell to small stores in Bago City. Two of her children are in college while one is in high school.

Emma and her husband Gerardo did backbreaking work planting rice in Manapla town, almost 43 km north of here, to earn their daily wages in 1987.

They were so poor she felt her children were silent supporters in their endeavor while she and her husband were at work in the rice fields, Emma recalled.

Small business

Emma's family, who lived in a small but made of coconut fronds, did not have food to eat three times a day.

"Life was difficult until 1989 when I discovered Project Dungganon and availed myself of a P1,000 loan to start a small business," she said.

She started selling cigarettes and other items targeting the students of Our Mantalis Elementary School. Later, she branched out into selling articles (rice porridge), cosmetic and pharmaceutical products.

The Morales family now owns an eatery, a grocery and a motorcycle repair shop, and three rice lands.

Her son, Bernie is now 26 years old and a mechanical engineer working for a sugar mill while her daughter Jennifer, 24, has a degree in education.

Project Dungganon was patterned after Yunus' Grameen Bank, providing micro-credit to the poor, especially women, to give them a chance to better their lives.

When the People Power uprising forced Ferdinand Marcos into exile, land reformist Daniel Lacson Jr. was appointed governor of Negros Occidental.

Lacson, having heard of the work of Yunus, sent three Negrense Occidental Board Member Cecilio del Castillo, executive director of NWTFI, to Bangladesh to learn about the Grameen Bank.

Del Castillo's task was to replicate the program in Negros, which was then reeling from a drop in sugar prices and coping with widespread malnutrition problems.

In 1989, with a grant of P1 million from the Canadian International Development Agency and P1 million from the provincial government, the NWTFI began Project Dungganon to help the poor women of Negros.

"Dungganon," is a Hiligaynon word for "responsible," which reflects the recognition of a people's right and capacity to achieve a sense of nobility on their own resolve, Del Castillo said.

In the first four years, they provided loans to 7,000 women in Negros. Today they have 54,488 loan beneficiaries not only in Negros Occidental but also in Negros Oriental, Cebu, Palawan, Samar, Leyte and Bohol. WWTFI chairperson Wilhelmina Gonzales said.

WWTFI now owns a five-story building that houses the Dungganon Bank Inc., a microfinance thrift bank in Bacolod City. It has P80.4 million in disbursements and a loan portfolio of P57.8.8 million, as of August this year, Gonzales added.

Repayment rate

The WWTFI has a loan repayment rate of 96 to 97 percent. WWTFI researcher Gilbert Montelibano said.

He noted that 3/4 percent of their clients of more than five years have improved their lives, and 20 percent of those classified as very poor are no longer very poor.

"Our mission is to bring the message of hope—to alleviate women from poverty and bring back dignity to their lives," Gonzales said. "It's not just money that we lend to the women. They are taught values that they must live by in order to avail of loans and succeed."

Poetic joust during wakes makes the grieving smile

By Ma. Elissa Lukban
Iloilo City

MANY RITUALS FOR THE DEAD BY Western Visayas are long, elaborate and expensive but those connecting the wake are way more long there become poetic jousts can make them inside.

"Iro-e," also spelled "Iroey," is folk poetry recited during traditional nine-day prayers after the burial of the dead. Delivered as a poetic joust between men and women, it reminds us console and cheer up the grieving family.

Long before the sending of text messages through mobile phones became popular, iro-e was also a social activity where young men and women find, flirt and get acquainted with possible mates. These days, scholars gloom for the iro-e's demise because they are rarely done even in rural areas. The mourners are now busy with card games, mahjong and bingo rather than the traditional poetic repartee that exhibit wit and the creative use of language and rhythm.

Rowena Rabuco, a former dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in the University of San Agustin, and now literature professor of the same school, said that iro-e is a "spontaneous and instinctive thing" felt verbal. tuition revealing their creativity."

Retrieval

Rabuco, with the help of her students, had retrieved 311 iro-e, which they transcribed in English and, in 2003, published in a book, "Folk Poetry: The Iro-e."

John Iremil Teodoro, of the university's Contributing Center for Research and Publications, said that Rabuco's book on iro-e is the most extensive critical work, making her the expert in the region.

Game

Reciting iro-e is part of a game played during the wake. One common game is called kandirit, where men and women sit on a floor in a circle, sing and pass around a clay that is hidden from the "it." When the singing stops, the person holding the thing recites a iro-e.

The person may then give the thing to the member of the opposite sex, who will also have to counter a iro-e. Aside from a ring, the game may pass around a pebble, plate, fan, handkerchief or candle. But iro-e rendition is a must.

Rabuco wrote that iro-e displays the Hiligaya's love for musicality and fascination with end-rhymes. The major contribution to the musical quality of iro-e is the repetition of final accented vowel or consonants.

"Iro ka bukid ang akong gindukhan/
Lom kag ngiw ang akon gingisngisan/
Ang weka ka gabuol ang buthaflor/
Ang weka ka gabuol ang buthaflor/
Ang weka sa kalibutan wa kabuhi."
("There is where my mountain I entered/
A lion and a tiger I wrestled with and mastered/
I minded not the difficulties/
Already to catch a glimpse of you, indeed.")

The sound and rhythm in iro-e are also helped by the use of alliteration, assonance with consonantgenic impact, said Rabuco.

Rabuco's book has divided the iro-e into three categories—those related to seasons, those related by the stars and those that are neutral or gender-free. The female-related iro-e admonishes, encourages or warns down a suggestion of the male-related iro-e. The moment iro-e could be just a play of words or a source of folk wisdom.

"Mga bitu-on sa langit/
Mga matahis, mag ma-dis/
Sabong man ang sa dalag/
Mga tigasing may hita. "
("The stars in the heavens above/
Are spread apart, and so does fate/
Even if women thighs are made/
The old and the young do not meet.")

Sexual diversion is shown in the iro-e, said Rabuco, implying the action of "up and down." The iro-e suggests the greater sexual gap between young and old, even in many contexts and milieu.

Double meaning

The iro-e is also replete with double meanings and images of nature, clues to the lovers' relationship with their new courtships. It can be coy, naughty, teasing, direct and mixed with social concern. Like the one of the female recited iro-e.

"Tinin-ka sa pasig/
Lutay sa mangyan/
Mangyan nga maputi/
Para sa sudlan ko nga masaligan."
("Hug and hop you bird-crow,/
Hop on the bitter gourd/
Boatgrass of bitter taste/
For a young man with food odor.")

Its small is important for many women looking for a husband, the iro-e expresses disgust for a man's physical odor. The use of crow is clever because ilonggo folk dislike the bird while mangyan is not favored because of its bitter taste, said Rabuco.

Personal qualities are also addressed in a iro-e, showing the values and world view of Hiligaynon.

"Sa pasalig ang maumay/
Pili-on ko gamayo/
Ang ambo-ako kinaray/
Ayo buka-ko sa hangko."
("If your I'll get married/
I'll choose one who is handsome/

MAYNARD LUCAS ORDILLO
MARYANN LUCAS ORDILLO
MARIA ORDILLO

Across the NATION

This is your feedback. Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Clark-Subic expressway 42% complete

Delays of more than 10 percent prompt rush work

By Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—AT LEAST 42 percent of the 94-km Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway has been finished and its contractors have fast-tracked construction activities to stop the project's more than 10 percent delay, the president of Bases Conversion Development Authority said.

"Slippage," or behind-schedule works at the Package 1 or the 16-km Subic-Clark segment, is totaled more than 10 percent while Package 2 or the 43-km Clark-Tarlac segment reached 8 percent, according to Narciso Abaya, BCDA president and chief executive officer.

Abaya also said the Japanese contractors of the project would pay for the delay.

Insurers involved in the project, however, said the project should be 50 percent complete by now if not for the slippage.

"The accomplishment report should be based on plans and programs, including actual timelines," said the source, a contractor who is in charge of one of the segments of the expressway.

"We have continuously assessed the progress of the project with our contractors and consultants. We are confident, and this is also agreed upon by the Japanese contractors, they will finish it on time and at cost, meaning there will be no cost budgetary," Abaya said in a telephone interview.

He described the slippage to be a "little high," but said the city would be ready to receive the motorists when the work schedules.

The contractors—Kajima, Obayashi, JFE Engineering and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Joint Venture for Package 1 and the Hazama, Taisei and Sojitsu Joint Joint Venture for Package 2—have started working on two shifts, 20 hours daily, he said.

Abaya said the delays have been caused by disputes over right-of-ways, by sub-contractors who abandoned the work or who failed to meet deadlines, and by strong typhoons since July.

The contractors source, however, said the BCDA should answer for the delays because of its failure to acquire right-of-way, due to its approval of scope of work, and the intervention of mayors who are lobbying for "a piece of the pie" that will in the increase in the slippage.

Abaya said he saw no major setbacks in the meet-up in the November 2005 opening.

"The Japanese contractors report to the BCDA board every other week. The entire BCDA board is monitoring the project," he said.

The controversies that had hounded the BCDA—the Peru Drive fort contract and "advance commissions" allegedly paid to top BCDA officials—have not set off the focus of the state-owned agency on the major infrastructure project by the Arroyo administration, Abaya said.

SPELL FUN
Street performers in colorful masks were the feature of the 27th year of Bacolod City's Masskara Festival that drew thousands of local and foreign tourists. The festival has been identified with the colorful and gay masks that are sold in the city's streets every year for the feast.

China source of funds for Pangasinan water system

DAGUPAN CITY—THE CHINESE government is financing a feasibility study for the rehabilitation of a major pipeline and water treatment plant to supply potable water from the San Roque multipurpose dam in San Manuel town to eastern and central Pangasinan, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr said.

He said Chinese Ambassador Li Jinjun, whom he hosted during a visit here last month, had informed him about the project's approval.

The Speaker said Gov Victor Agbayani, throughout, proposed the project to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In his letter, Agbayani said the availability and quality of water from traditional sources, especially in coastal areas, has dramatically declined due to saltwater intrusion.

"The project is envisioned to supply potable water to major urban centers like the cities of Urdaneta, Dagupan and San Carlos, and other adjoining towns along the route," Agbayani said.

A feasibility study is needed to determine the viability of using San Roque dam as a major source of potable water without affecting its capacity to produce power for the Luzon Interlink in Pangasinan, he said.

De Venecia said the Chinese government would finance the feasibility study while the establishment of a major pipeline and treatment plant would be a long-term loan. Rhonda Rubio-Pareño, Inquirer Northern Luzon

US soldiers wield brushes for classroom paint jobs

DASMARIÑAS CITY—AFTER DELIVering medical equipment for use by hospitals serving impoverished communities in Mindanao, visiting American soldiers went around the city and started repainting school buildings.

The US servicemen—some veterans of the Old Harpers, which docked here several days ago.

Maj. John Sutfield, public affairs officer of the Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines (JSOTFP), said the community work before leaving for the countries were part of the commitment of the US military to help the people of Mindanao.

"They are still here so they can do quality time for community works," Sutfield said.

The 20 US servicemen have removed new materials on dilapidated school buildings, such as in Bendebong Elementary School. They also did some painting works on the school buildings, which are currently encroached and people are on a memorial break.

They also handed in hope boxes loaded with stories and biscuits, sewing machines, textbooks and sport supplies, which the children could use once classes resume.

Ibrahim Amil, Paritk district school supervisor, said the Americans have been doing carpentry works for several days already.

Amil said he was thankful in the US servicemen because the government has no funds for repaint jobs.

Some locals, including children lured by the presence of the Americans, have also started to help in repainting the school.

Ten-year-old Erwin Mejia said he even asked his father's permission so he could have a day's break from farming.

In his little way, Erwin said he wanted to help.

Along with some locals, Erwin mowed desks and chairs in the American servicemen would have bigger rooms to work.

AN AMERICAN soldier repaints a classroom of the Pasalubong Elementary School in a remote area about 8 km from here. Tanodbayan City

Int'l relief aid groups, RP NGOs commit funds to help Guimaras folk

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

JORDAN, GUIMARAS—INTERnational and local relief and funding agencies and nongovernment organizations have committed to fund the rehabilitation of oil-spill contaminated areas in the island and provide alternative livelihood to affected residents.

At least 13 agencies, institutions and NGOs pledged their support to fund programs and projects in the next five years during the Source Forum organized by the provincial government at the capitol town of Jordan on Thursday.

The proposed programs focused on rehabilitation of marine resources especially the mangroves and providing alternative livelihood to affected residents, mostly fishermen and shell gatherers.

Representatives of the agencies and organizations presented their plans and areas of concern during the day-long forum.

The International relief agencies and funding institutions include the Japan International Cooperation Agency Liberi, the German Development Cooperation (GTZ), World Vision International United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Canadian International Development Agency, Oxfam and the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

The NGOs that attended the forum were the League of Corporate Foundations, Philcoa Foundation, Haribon and Virgin Foundation, the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), Save the Children, Tejaya sa Kanayagan, Save Our Seas, KSD, Pagapas Foundation, and the Bicol Rural Development Center of Inc.

The University of the Philippines in the Visayas has offered its technical assistance especially in research and monitoring of the effects to the environment and community. The League of Corporations Foundations (LCF), a network of at least 69 corporate foundations, including the Philippine Jolly Inspirer, is planning to establish mangrove nurseries and support a mangrove rehabilitation program, said Allan Verzosa, chair of the LCF communications committee.

The LCF also plans to bring in computers for public schools and provide alternative livelihood like hog raising and poultry production and entomology.

NBI sues 3 Taiwanese, Canadian for illegal casino in Clark

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF Investigation (NBI) has filed illegal gambling charges against the foreigns and local directors of an offshore illegal virtual casino operating in the Clark Special Economic Zone in Angeles City, Pampanga.

The Taiwanese incorporators and directors of British Grand Virtue International Inc.—the alleged illegal casino—were identified as Chang Wei Chieh, Tang Jen Chieh, and Wang Teng Li, all residing at the Pan Royale Condominium, Dona Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

The NBI likewise filed charges against the company's Canadian director Steve Jing Chen Hwang, also a resident of Pan Royale Condominium, Dona Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, and Filipino incorporator Edgar Lim, of Astrid Interview Enterprises, 2636 Roman Blvd., Angeles City, Pampanga last Oct. 27.

A complaint filed by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) at the NBI alleged that British Grand Vision International was behind the illegal casino's operations.

Filipino Chan Ephraim Gonzales, through his chief legal counsel Carlos Bautista Jr., said that the British Grand Vision International had begun operating an Internet casino without any permit from the government agency early this year.

The Pagcor officials also told the NBI that the online casino was so profitable that nearby casinos in the Mimosa and Fontana recreational parks "have been losing money."

De Guzman said that after applying for a search warrant, the agents raided the establishment and seized various tables, dealers' chairs and fixtures, TV sets, casino playing cards, "chips boxes" for the playing cards, computers with plasma screens, webcasts and digital video cameras, and servers used to store live casino and sports transactions.

Investigation showed that in order to play the online casino games, the clients were required to download the software provided by the operators and install it in their computers.

The players are then required to create an account with the online operators before playing games such as "baccarat in card games." Female online dealers then interact with the clients through webcam.

"Anybody in the country even those having dial-up could participate in the online games," De Guzman said in an earlier interview.

Sierra Madre logging feeds poaching syndicate

MAURIAN QUEZON—THE VAST tree sprawl of trees must be stopped in the Sierra Madre forest in northern Luzon province, said Quezon to put an end to the use of this natural resource as a major transhipment point of illegal lumber, the local head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said Thursday.

Oscar Rivera, community environment and natural resources officer, said the ultimate solution to end the smuggling of lost lumber is this town in the northern tip of the Sierra Madre, dependent on the prevention of illegal logging in the eastern province and the Aurora Maider forest that lies in the border towns of General Nakar, Quezon and Dingalan, Aurora provinces.

"Once the illegal logging has stopped in these areas, there would be no more smuggling of illegally cut lumber here in Mauban. The true demand must at the source," Rivera explained.

The DENR authorities said the lost lumber from the said areas were transported to Mauban, 157 km east southeast of Manila, by tugboats from the Pacific Ocean.

Rivera said they recently organized a multisectoral group to guard the frontlines in their intensified campaign against illegal logging incidents which have been eating Mauban as a take-off point.

Last week, local government officials led by Mauban Mayor Bernardo Llanza along with the DENR, police and the Philippine Coast Guard vowed to a memorandum of agreement to stop the use of Mauban as a transhipment point of illegal lumber.

Rivera said the DENR has also dissolved several of their monitoring stations along the Mauban-Infanta-Lucena tourist grove saw to this newly-formed multisectoral checkpoint located in this town.

"With the multisectoral approach, the battle against illegal logging has now become a major public concern giving it more teeth," the lawyer Pascale Abraham has become a key agent who will round up illegal timber which caused it a big as-it-center of illegal logging operations" said the consultant, DelRio Mallari Jr. Engineer Southern Luzon

It was believed that a former head of the Quezon DENR was aided due to his unholy alliance with the Mauban-based illegal loggers.

The rampant smuggling of lost lumber in Mauban, according to Quezon local member Elader Fuentebella, a native of Mauban, was due to the existence of a local, called "Mauban Boys," a total of 30 members, who are the syndicate. DelRio Mallari Jr. Engineer Southern Luzon

FEEDHOLES
Children were terrible at the Tanza Cemetery in Iloilo City as their playground, seizing the chance to roam around the burial grounds ahead of All Souls Day when hundreds of people are expected to flock to the graves of their dead loved ones.

Military says No. 3 woman rebel in Leyte, her aide are captured

By Jael Arruza
Inquirer Visayas

ORMOC CITY—AN ALLEGED high ranking communist rebel and her security aide were arrested in the town of Leyte in Leyte province, the military said on Thursday.

Captured was Nilda Pilos Mercant, 42, allegedly a ranking member of the Southern Leyte Front (SLF) as head of its education arm, said her wife, identified as Richard Dexter Pecate, 25.

Lt. Col. Lope Gregorio commanding officer of the 19th Infantry Battalion, said the two were captured by soldiers from the 19th IB and 63rd IB in Barangay Cabajosa, Leyte, Leyte.

Recovered from them were a homemade grenade, a hand grenade, and several communist documents. They were arrested while riding a dilapidated motorcycle without plate no. 1993, which, was likewise seized by the military.

Reyes claimed that Mendoza, who he said was also known by her aliases "Lenna Gay," "Lala," "Myra" and "Pamela," was the No. 3 woman rebel in the SLF.

Reyes said the arrest of the two suspected rebels should serve as a warning to rebels operating on Leyte Island.

"I have to emphasize that to the people of Leyte that I am very passionate in my resolve to assist my commanders in the area to end any communist hostilities in the area," he said.

Last September, Reyes announced he was giving himself six months to a year to crush the insurgency in Leyte.

The capture of the two rebels followed the killing in January of Barangay Bondigan and the capture of Hector Collarna, reportedly the top communist commander in Leyte province.

In another development, Reyes said two former rebels were killed on Oct. 11 in the latest purging of communist rebels accused of being deep penetration agents of the government.

The two were identified as Mario Singson, 38, a councilman of Barangay Mahayag, Ormoc City and his nephew Rolando Singson, 22.

Reyes said the two and their wives were on their way home from Barangay Mahayag to Sitio Patuncag of the same village when a group of unidentified men running amuck targeted the couple and shot them dead.

There's also an economic reason.

A plot in a private cemetery at the southernmost tip of Bantayan Island costs between P25,000 and P50,000, officials said.

Just outside the PVB Hospital, which closed at least 15 Bantayan villages that are now unwilling the catch boats of fishes, a private cemetery has been opened.

Located in Barangay Malbuyo, it is home now to 12 graves.

But the town's Bantayan town officials said the neglect.

Cultural commissioner for Juan Luna Shrine Bobby Balcita said it is planning to and post in the re-admission of Bantayanganon Governors to the late 19th Century Guillermo Tolentino, who organized the Katipunan in Bantayan and southern Pampanga, and his brother Pablo Cruz had been built in a complex of graves.

As for the living, Calleja and Abbano said the returning has been slow, with not less than 5,000 families back in the west. The rest could not return to Bantayan Island because they occupied their old villages, they said.

Roundup

Mayon alert level lowered

LEGAZPI CITY—The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology has lowered the alert level of Mayon volcano from two to one. The Phivolcs, however, continued to warn against entry into the 7-km extended danger zone and the 6-km permanent danger zone of Mayon. It also warned against flooding and debris flows and areas that are lahar-prone. It said Mayon was standing by normalcy since the lava accumulation on Oct. 3. The alert level was lowered as a 4.1 magnitude earthquake struck Malilipot and Tabaco on Thursday.
Joseph D. Bonoan, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Wanted man wounded in clash

LAMP NORTH (18) Laguna—One of Cavite's most wanted men was wounded when he exchanged shots with policemen who tried to serve him a warrant for his arrest in Calamba, Laguna, Senior Supt. Mario Caballejo Jr., officer in charge of the Calabarzon police, said Wilson Ramirez, listed as the eighth most wanted criminal in Cavite, was the primary suspect in a murder case in Trece Martires City and has been looking for several years. He told Caballejo and Municipal police operations said he [illegible] in Barangay Pulong at around 8 p.m. to serve his warrant of arrest when Ramirez opened fire, shooting a policeman. Ramirez pointed after he was hit in the right leg. He was immediately brought to [illegible].
Dexter Cruz, Inquirer Mindanao

Agrarian reform exec slain

Santa (18) — An undersecretary was shot dead in the aggression who is the son of Mabi town in Davao Oriental on Oct. 23, Supt. Eufilio Ebuenga, public information officer of regional police command, said the police were still investigate the motive of the killing of Jacinto Ramirez, 62, chief of the DAR municipal agrarian reform office. The victim was killed while he was refilling his driving [illegible] Mike Medina.
Dexter Cruz, Inquirer Mindanao

6 men rob students in bus

LUCBAN (18) — Four armed men robbed a bus, with nearly students aboard, along the Lucban-Sariaya highway on Oct. 25. Police Regional Director Chief Senior Group Dinadagan Ghaza said the robbery happened at about 2:50 p.m. in Barangay Tayuman, in Magsaysay town. Medio said two of the suspects, who pretended to be passengers, took Cornelio Rosario Mateo, 64, of the bus he was driving. PNP, North Cotabato Provincial Police Office commander Senior Superintendent Wilfredo Cayton. The suspects divested the passengers, many of them students of the University of Southern Mindanao in Kabacan town, of their cellular phones and other valuables, totaling about P7,000 in [illegible].
Charlie C. Adduru, Inquirer Mindanao

2 robbers killed

LAMP NORTH (18) Laguna—An alert security guard gunned down two suspected robbers, one of them an active Boy Scout, who held up a convenience store in Cavinti on Thursday. Barangay Tayuman police chief Supt. Edwin Reyes identified one of the slain suspects as Lito Pallanante, a resident of Barangay Bigo, Santa Cruz. The other suspect remained unidentified. Reyes said Pallanante and the other [illegible] Blue convenience store outside the Phil. Carabao Industrial Park in Barangay Langkaan 1 at around 6 a.m. and immediately announced a holdup. He said Pallanante drew a gun but Security Guard Melchor Abib, the companion considered money from the cashier.
Marie Alvarez, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Wire thieves arrested

LAMP NORTH (18) Laguna—Intelligence operatives of the Calabarzon police arrested [illegible] suspected thieves and recovered [illegible] in Calauan, Laguna on Thursday, police said on Friday. Among those arrested were Ace Pena, Salud Abner Angeles Alfonso Paulito Cura, Johnny Duplito and Royal Sumalinog. Chief Supt. Nicolas Rodriguez, newly appointed Calabarzon police director, said the suspects were employees of a certain entity. Aug. 3 suspected leader believed to be in cahoots with a syndicate involved in stealing electrical wires. In a statement, Rodriguez said the five were arrested after investigators police operatives found hundreds of kilograms of high-tension electrical wires hidden in [illegible] Barangay [illegible].
Marie Alvarez, Inquirer Southern Luzon

The dead returned first in lahar-buried town

By Roselle Ongoy
Inquirer Central Luzon

BACOLOR, PAMPANGA—THERE'S a long-standing joke in this town, and it goes like this:

"Minsan ka pang umuwi nang mate ka nang malaya (The first to return home here are the dead, and the living)," cracked Bacolor Mayor Nilo Cabello, visibly drawing laughter from among early twenty-farmers like him at the Sta. Ines public cemetery on Wednesday.

From the humor, the kind of laughter the joke elicits was not humiliating to the dead or to the living.

"It is more of a tribute of sorts to the living who take care of their dead," said Cabello.

Despite their close brushes with death and despite suffering tragic losses, residents still found the heart to fulfill the wishes of loved ones to be buried in their town even as it had been inundated by Mt. Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions and continued lahar backflow, Cabello said.

The worst lahar onslaught came in a single sweep at dawn of Oct. 1, 1995.

Residents cracked out what to Cabello was a Hermanos' tale.

As the avalanche which swallowed up 67 barangays, "they rally to death threats, they had to dig under 30 to 35 meters of lahar to recover the remains and robbery threat to save graves built on top of the old ones."

Lyric Juan Sison said she lay at the tomb—the only thing that remained of the family's mausoleum—served to informant points for locating other bodies.

Tracing exact sites using that wide landmark assist an all-day backhoe effort cooked up to unearth the remains that she survived to have begun in 1999.

This was about the most time that her family could dig their house and the graves of her parents in the Juan Subdivision, she recalled, never gave up until they hit the right tomb.

Display of wealth

Those with income from rebuilt elaborate mausoleums. Others use the complex as the occasion by exceeding the statutes of [illegible] and [illegible] and [illegible] and

SPORTS

WELCOME! Big man Dilbert Lee (top) tackles Red Bull point guard Warren Ybanez for possession in their game last night. AUGUST SEBASTIAN

Barako slay Dragons

Guiao: 'We were lucky to escape with a win'

By Pheong B. Castillo

FOR SOMEONE WHOSE TEAM CAME ROARING BACK FROM 17 points down to prevail, Yeng Guiao certainly did not sound at all satisfied.

"We're lucky to escape with a win," Guiao said, a few minutes after Red Bull struggled to post an 86-77 decision at newcomer Welcoat in the PBA Philippine Cup eliminations last night. "We are expecting a lot more difficult games for us, especially from the top contenders.

"But, we'll take a win anyway we can," he added. "Ang importante ay manalo (the important thing is to win)."

Red Bull's fourth victory in six games, which is worth a piece of second place with idle Barangay Ginebra and Talk 'N Text, was not an all-pretty.

Not only did the Bulls trail, 22-39, but the coach-up job which they thwarted one man clearly not pleasing to the eyes—with open shots missed, heavy errors committed and a number of veterans playing way below par.

Mike Penning helped the Bulls gain ground in the second quarter by shooting 3 of his team-leading 22 points, and rookie Carlo Sharma broke out with a career-high 20 points and his first season double-double with 11 boards to power Red Bull.

Jun-Jun Cabatu matched Penning's total also for his career-high, but the Dragons still fell to 1-4 just the same after two crucial bloopers inside the final three minutes. Sacramento [illegible] their downfall and threw away what was a magnificent effort early on.

Guiao sounded gloomy because of the fact that no one had stepped up to take the place of Lordy Tugade, whose, the team doctor says, is likely to be out for a month or more.

Late Sports

More stories on A23 to 26

Guiao conceded that his veterans who are supposed to be consistent have been struggling, more notably Jireh Villanueva, Larry Rosadio and guards Cedric Cruz and Topex Robinson.

Villanueva finished with only four points and the same number of turnovers, Rosadio, last year's top rookie and the perfect Topex clone, had only two points on 17 minutes. Robinson and Cruz played so bad that Warren Ybanez played for 24 minutes in see-how-long for the Red Bull offense.

Red Bull needed all game to chipping away at that deficit, with Dennis trailing a triple at the 5:06 mark to bridge the game's last tie at 74 before unanswered baskets by Sharma, Arnie Mendoza and Rich Alvarez gave the Bulls an 80-74 lead.

Jojo Tangkay, after cutting that six-point lead to half with a very bad but crowd-pleasing three-pointer the air in the next 49 could officially be said to be Congress' domain.

The scores:

Red Bull (86)—Penning 22, Sharma 20, Mendoza 14, Alvarez 7, Rosario 6, Segura 6, Villanueva 4, Fermarán 2, Cruz 2, Magsaysay 0, Tangkay 0, Robinson 0.

Welcoat (77)—Cabatu 20, Tangkay 15, Celda 10, Reyes 8, Wainwright 7, Bolick 6, Lee 4, Jaguros 3, Joseph 2, Ilo, Mark 2.

Quarters: 20-20, 41-40, 62-62, 86-77.

Beermen reactivate Ildefonso

GAMES TODAY (At Cuneta Astrodome)

9:30 a.m.—Alaska vs. San Miguel

(At San Fernando, Pampanga)

4 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs. Coca-Cola

ILDEFONSO THE SUPERPOWER IS TAKING shape.

San Miguel Beer reactivated two-time Most Valuable Player awardee Danny Ildefonso yesterday, making him available for the Beermen's match against no-11 in Subic, Zambales, today.

Their first 3-0 start required a revamped lineup. However, signal that looks every inch a powerhouse quintet poised to dominate the field after nearing the PBA Philippine Cup off with three straight victories.

But those three defeats were nothing but smokescreens to hide what the Beermen truly are. An all-star team that can go 11 deep every game.

The Beermen lost their first three matches because Danny Seigle, Ildefonso and Brandon Lee Cubbay vastly shorten in the squad, were denied reinforcement by injury.

Seigle has returned and the Beermen have won two straight games. Now, it is Ildefonso's turn to return and he will debut against the Aces in game at 6:30 p.m. in Subic today.

Ildefonso joins a squad roughened by a mid-conference trade that netted ex-Shoeless big-man Armond Ashford and former Red Bull star Lordy Tugade.

Old hands Olsen Racela, Dondon Hontiveros, Chris Calaguio, Wesley Gonzales and Willie Wilkinson will join hands with quality rookie Lit Tolentino and Cubby Espinosa against the Aces, who will [illegible] Yu, Jamaal Magdani, Arnulfo Santos, in the 4:30 p.m. match.

In the other two collision rounds, Talk 'N Text battles Sta. Lucia at 5 p.m. in Intramuros, Pampanga.

Managing Energy Consumption is in a Company's Hands with

GEMS GLOBE ENERGY MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

Electrical Consumption: a Fact of Life or a Resource to Be Managed Effectively?

All companies require the use of electricity in order to conduct business. From air conditioners and lights that run in the background to more mission critical equipment such as computers and heavy machinery are all powered by electricity, which is consumed round the clock in order for a business to survive and grow. Unfortunately energy costs money, with companies spending millions on an annual basis on their electric bills alone. The question that plagues most managers is: **"Is there a way to lower my energy consumption without affecting the way I do business?"**

Managing Energy: There Must Be a Better Way

Attempts have been made by companies to manage their energy consumption. Some even hiring people whose only role is to go from one office location to another to check and compare electrical consumption. This employee would log in all the information manually and encode it into a worksheet later for management to analyze at a future date. Although this is an earnest attempt at managing energy, there must be a better, faster more efficient way to do this. **Globe Energy Management Solution (GEMS)** just does that.

GEMS- a Solution to Energy Problems.

GlobeSolutions with the help of its partners **M2M[2]** and **Raffles Solutions & Services, Inc.** have created a solution that will help you monitor your energy consumption from various locations, sending the information wirelessly via GPRS to an online portal that not only collates the information but also converts it into a graphical form for ease of interpretation. An example would be comparing a company's monthly power usage over the past 4 months. You could quickly see via the GEMS portal whether your steps of saving electricity are paying off and how much more you need to do.

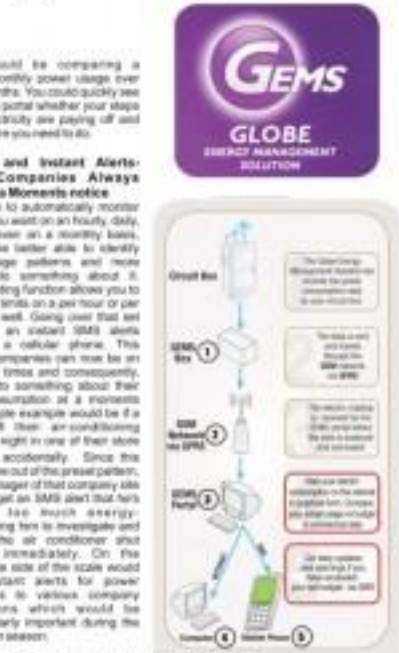
Budgeting and Instant Alerts- Keeping Companies Always Informed at a Moment's notice

By being able to automatically monitor information you want on an hourly, daily, weekly and even on a monthly basis, companies are better able to identify electrical usage patterns and more importantly do something about it. **GEMS'** budgeting function allows you to assign preset limits on a per hour or per day basis as well. Going over that set limit triggers an instant SMS alerts received on a cellular phone. This means that companies can now be on the ball at all times and consequently, are able to do something about their electrical consumption at a moments notice. A simple example would be if a company left their air conditioning system on at night in one of their store outlets accidentally. Since this would be out of the preset pattern, the manager of that company site would get an SMS alert that he's using too much energy- prompting him to investigate and have the air conditioner shut down immediately. On the opposite side of the scale would be instant alerts for power outages to various company locations which would be particularly important during the typhoon season.

GEMS budgeting function allows you to assign preset limits on a per hour or per day basis as well

What Does the Future Hold?

Energy consumption is the first step in managing a company's environment. **GlobeSolutions** along with its partners are not stopping there. There are already discussion on how the **GEMS** solution can be applied to other fields. One fast food company is already discussing how **GEMS** can manage the temperatures of all its freezers making sure they are always at the optimum temperature. A call center is making sure all its floors' air conditioners are set at the proper rate - saving money and stopping their employees from getting sick from too-cold a work environment. The bottom line is that **GlobeSolutions** and its associates are willing to build solutions together with its clients adding value in how to better the way their clients do their business.



How GEMS works

Get notification and alerts to be assigned by authorized users when GEMS alert budgets are exceeded

If your company wants to manage its energy consumption more effectively call the **GlobeSolutions** hotline at **(02) 738-1999 to find out how.**

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700 Pasay City employees dismissed

Ousted workers plan class suit vs acting officials

By Jocelyn R. Uy

CHRISTMAS MAY BE BLEAK THIS YEAR FOR some 700 Pasay City Hall employees.

Acting city officials are terminating the services of casual and contractual employees, legal researchers and consultants in the office of the mayor, city administrator and office of the vice mayor.

An Inquirer source, who requested anonymity, said the 700 or so employees would be jobless by the end of the month.

In a memorandum the other day, acting Mayor Allen Paredejas informed 30 security agents, clerks, utility workers and 32 consultants in the office of the mayor and city administrator that their services were terminated as of yesterday. A similar memo was issued on Monday by acting Vice Mayor Kevin Trinidad to all regular staff, casual employees and consultants appointed by suspended Vice Mayor Imelda Calixto. The employees were considered terminated as of last Wednesday.

Calixto, Mayor Pimentel "Pastor" Trinidad and 11 city councilors are on preventive suspension for six months for allegedly entering into anomalous contracts involving garbage collection and disposal.

"The termination is whimsical and malicious. Removing co-terminus employees was wrong as the term of the suspended officials had not ended," said a source. He described as a shotgun approach the way the termination order was served, saying these were posted on bulletin boards. He added that they were already preparing a class suit charging Paredejas and other acting officials with illegal termination and abuse of authority.

STREET KIDS IN ART

Artist Joey Velasco documents the world of street children through an ongoing exhibit at Artchitz Gallery in SM Megamall. 'Hapag ng Pag-asa,' shown above, is one of several oil paintings in the exhibit. (STORY ON P2) (LOVELY GARCIA)

Hospital negligence issue nothing new

BEAUH SEGERAW TSHENGO Dejene recently came out with this remark after investigation of the Final Medical Exams, saying the deaths of seven new-born infants at the facility were not caused by the hospital's negligence and dirty equipment. The investigation also found the babies' mothers had infection of the blood which they had not acquired at the hospital, he added.

Although Dejene said the investigation revealed "some degree of negligence" on the part of the hospital, Dejene said the probe team did not find a link between contaminated equipment and the outbreak of neonatal sepsis, the cause of the infants' deaths.

Were the probers dined and wined so they would come up with a decision favorable to the government hospital? If not, were they motivated by camaraderie—the "them and us" syndrome—since those involved are government health people and the probers are from the Department of Health?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

A former student nurse, who did on-the-job training at the RMC three years ago, said the hospital had dirty equipment and the staff didn't care to sterilize them. The complainant, now a licensed nurse, said the staff didn't have any regard for the patients' well-being. Doctors and nurses were also allegedly arrogant toward mothers about to have babies.

As I said in my column dated Oct. 17, the alleged shabby treatment of patients at the RMC delivery room was brought to my attention by the student nurse in the now defunct "Sumbong mo: Isa Tulfo" program. This columnist, in turn, informed Dr. Winston Go, RMC director, about the complaint. You know what happened to the nurse? She was expelled by her school for coming to me.

I fought for the student nurse and got the services of lawyer-friend, Victorio Chanliau, who made representations with the university to reinstate her.

Because my attention was now focused on having the student reinstated, the complaint on how the RMC staff handled sick patients was shelved unfortunately forgotten.

***

You know what happened to the Clark Development Corp. (CDC), the government agency that runs the former U.S. Air Force Base in Pampanga, signed with a private firm a lease contract to build a casino and resort hotel.

My source told me Ems bagged the contract for a song, and that somebody at CDC allegedly got P68 million.

The Office of the Ombudsman should look into the contract to see if the allegation is true.

UP, Ayala to set up sci-tech park in QC

By DJ Yap

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES signed a contract yesterday with Ayala Land Inc. to develop a science and technology park in Quezon City.

One of the biggest collaborations yet between academe and business, the partnership will see the rise of the UP Town Center's S&T Park, an ambitious "multi-billion" research facility on Commonwealth Avenue in Diliman.

Top brass

University president Emerlinda Roman and Board of Regents chair Carlito Perez and Ayala Land chair Fernando Zobel de Ayala and president Jaime Ayala signed the contract during a luncheon meeting yesterday at the UP Executive House.

Present at the signing were Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., former UP president Francisco Nemenzo Jr., UP regent Abraham Sarmiento, and Ayala Land senior vice president Ma. Victoria Mendoza.

Historic venture

Ayala described the contract as a "historic" venture, a model of development for other public and private colleges and universities.

Though he did not mention how much the project would cost, Perez said it was the first "multi-billion" partnership between an academic institution and a business organization in the country.

Sprawling campus

A jubilant air the project revealed that the future S&T park would be built on a 37.5-hectare property that will be converted into a sprawling campus of several four-story buildings for 40,000 full-time employees.

Companies located in the park will be in high technology fields, like telecommunications, information technology, and biotechnology.

High value

"Others will be in high value business process outsourcing, including animation, software development, design and engineering.

"The park will provide exposure for UP professors and students to world-class companies and the latest technologies and trends," the pritner said.

Learning laboratory

Ayala said he envisioned the park to be a "dynamic learning laboratory" where a community of students, teachers and business leaders converged to make commercially relevant advances in science and technology.

Leading R&D university

Nemenzo said the S&T park was important in strengthening the UP's position as the leading research and development university in the country and in the region.

"Governments all over the world have recognized the all-important link between scientific expertise and economic development, and universities have set up S&T parks adjacent to their campuses," she said.

Examples

She mentioned Bangalore and Hyderabad in India, Toshiba Science City in Japan, Haidien Science Park in Beijing, Singapore Science Park, and Cyberjaya connected Silicon Valley in the United States.

METROBRIEFS

E-mail senders charged

POLICE yesterday filed charges against two women alleged to be among the sources of virus-laden passed through e-mail last week, warning of a second one against a mail in Marikina City. The two suspects, Mark Anthony Ivanne Ivanovich Cruz and Jennifer Cruz, were charged with computer fraud and intelligence and detection management bureau Insul Director Reynaldo Villar of the Eastern Police District the complaint filed against Cruz, Michael Angelo Cruz, and Jennifer Cruz in Marikina City Prosecutor's Office. The two allegedly e-mailed messages saying police arrested an Abu Sayyaf member who had executed a plan to bomb SM Megamall but Supreme

Edson E. Escalon Jr.

Makati drive vs drugs

MAKATI CITY authorities executed down into a compound of shanties connected to be scale of drug peddling in Barangay Pio del Pilar in Barangay Guadalupe Viejo before dawn yesterday. Members of the Makati Special Weapons and Tactics team, the Station Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force, operatives of the Makati Anti-Drug Abuse Council and barangay officials conducted simultaneous raids on the compounds of Ote Lazaro Compound in Kanto and the suspects. Makati police chief, Supt. Ishael Cruz said that out of 200 operations roundups during the two-hour operation, only one was found in police custody for pending drug-related cases.

Tara G. Yap

Enchanted Halloween

ENCHANTED KINGDOM's Spooky Suitcase Gothic-ology Costume Competition is spookier, freakier and creepier! The fun is open only to walk-in guests who come in their scariest costumes patterned after monthly themed silhouettes, artists, movies, cartoon and fantasy characters. Guests who qualify will get free tickets to unlimited rides. Enchanted Kingdom, in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, the country's first and only world-class theme park, has seven theme zones and over 25 world-class rides and attractions. General Admission Day Passes are P800, Child, Senior Citizen Day Passes, P450, and Senior Citizens Day Passes, P680. For more information, log on to www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph.

Up ahead: more trials for Binay

By Norman Bordadora and Tara Y. Quimbo

AN ARREST WARRANT FOR MAKATI MAYOR Jejomar Binay may be issued by the Sandiganbayan Monday.

Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Godofredo de Leggaje, chair of the Sandiganbayan third division, said they would issue a warrant of arrest for the mayor if they find probable cause to prosecute him for graft in connection with alleged purchases of multi-million peso worth of overpriced furniture for city hall from 1999 to 2001.

But in a press conference Wednesday, Binay expressed confidence he will be cleared in the anti-graft court to suspend proceedings on the case against him since he had a pending motion for a reinvestigation in the Office of the Ombudsman.

Leggaje said that after the Sandiganbayan raffled off cases to the five divisions of the antigraft body, they were reviewing information filed by the Ombudsman. He said they might be able to ascertain probable cause for the issuance of the warrant by Monday.

Unresolved

Binay said that with his motion, "the action of Sandiganbayan on the case should be suspended."

In his motion, Binay asked the Sandiganbayan to defer action on the graft case against him, his wife Elenita, several city officials and private individuals, citing his unresolved pleading before the Office of the Ombudsman seeking a review of the case.

The Ombudsman has also charged Binay's wife with graft for the alleged P130 million overprice of furniture and fixtures.

Elenita was mayor of Makati when the purchases were made.

The case was elevated by the Ombudsman to the Sandiganbayan, based on a complaint against the Binays by Rolando Brillantes, former Makati vice mayor and a long-time Binay foe.

Brillantes was also behind the administrative case that caused the suspension of Binay, Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado and Makati City's 10 councilors last week. He alleged City Hall had ghost employees on its payroll.

Binay secured a temporary restraining order from the Court of Appeals that lifted his suspension. Mercado got the same reprieve restraining order from the appellate court.

The filing of graft cases against Binay, the head of the United Opposition, followed the Ombudsman's order of preventive suspension issued to Binay City Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad.

The WORLD

Editor Lorraine B. Ocampo

Bush OKs 1,126-km Mexico border wall

No Pinochet gold stash in HK, says bank

SANTIAGO, CHILE—SOLIMBITE allegedly showing former dictator Gen. Augusto Pinochet stashed a huge gold hoard at the HSBC bank in Hong Kong are forgeries, the Chilean office of the bank said Thursday.

No accounts in Pinochet's name have been found in the bank, HSBC said in a statement.

The local unit of London-based banking group HSBC Holdings PLC said it carefully reviewed the documents presented by the Chilean State Defense Council, a government agency in charge of defending government interests.

The documents it reviewed suggest that the bank is holding $160 million (over 8.26 billion) in Hong Kong under Pinochet's name.

"HSBC at its a position to confirm that those documents are false," the statement said. AP

It added that the bank will continue its cooperate with the government.

The surprise announcement by the bank came hours after the country's Court of Appeals dismissed the case for a probe into reports that Pinochet had stashed nine tons of gold equivalent to millions of dollars in the bank. AP

COMMORANTS GET ALL THE FUN
Lindered photo shows fishermen and their fish-catching birds, cormorants, working at sunrise on the Li River near Xingping, China. AP

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH signed election-year legislation on Thursday to build 1,126 km (700 miles) of fencing along the US-Mexican border to combat illegal immigration, prompting a strong protest from Mexico.

Republicans hoped the legislation would give them a boost as they try to head off a strong Democratic attempt to take control of the US Congress in Nov. 7 elections.

"We have a responsibility to secure our borders. We take that responsibility seriously," Bush said in a signing ceremony in the White House.

But Mexican President-elect Felipe Calderon said in Ottawa after meeting Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper that he deplored the move because "the fence doesn't resolve anything" and will cause more Mexican deaths on the border.

"Humanity committed a grave mistake in building the Berlin Wall. I'm sure that the United States is committing a grave mistake in building this fence," Calderon said.

Bush had long opposed supporting a bill that was limited to border enforcement, spending months in a failed attempt to persuade Congress to back a comprehensive measure that would include a guest-worker program for illegal immigrants.

The Senate had approved a measure he preferred, but Republicans in charge of the US House of Representatives insisted on border enforcement only, fueling election-year fears from Americans upset about the impact of illegal immigration in their states.

Democrats called the legislation a political stunt, and criticized strained relations with Mexico and accused Republicans of lax border enforcement. Reuters

Russia rejects Europe's UN draft resolution on Iran

MOSCOW—RUSSIA REJECTED Thursday a draft UN resolution put forward by European powers imposing Iran's nuclear program, saying the proposed measures did not advance objectives agreed on earlier by major world powers.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the resolution, put forward Wednesday by Britain, France and Germany, would not be effective in containing Iran's program and contradicted the consensus reached by the five permanent UN Security Council members and Germany.

"I think that in this respect the draft resolution that has been presented clearly does not further the objectives that the six powers agreed on earlier," Lavrov was quoted as saying by Interfax news agency.

Those goals, Lavrov said, included preventing proliferation of "sensitive technology" while also keeping open "all necessary channels of communication with Iran."

One of Lavrov's top deputies, Sergei Kislyak, said separately that Russia was "carefully studying" the draft resolution. However, in a "long negotiating process it required" to find a mutually acceptable decision. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Reward for Africa's good leaders

LONDON—A self-made Sudanese millionaire is offering African politicians an annual prize worth $5 million (three years) and lifelong pension to encourage democratic leadership in government. "Nothing, simply nothing, is more important to African development than good governance. Today I am launching a foundation which aims to change fundamentally the choices faced by African leaders," said billionaire, South African-style statesman Nelson Mandela, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, former US President Bill Clinton, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz welcomed the initiative. The $5 million prize will be paid over 10 years and the winners will then receive $200,000 a year for life. Reuters

Muhammad cartoons publishers cleared

COPENHAGEN—A Danish court on Thursday acquitted the bosses of the Jyllands-Posten newspaper who had been sued by Muslim groups for printing 12 cartoons of the Prophet Mahomet in September 2005. The judge at Aarhus district court ruled the cartoons were neither offensive or seen like scheduled to denigrate Muslims, according to court papers. "Even if the text accompanying the pictures could be read as being derogatory and mocking, the cartoons are not offensive," the court said. Seven Danish Muslim groups launched legal proceedings in March against Jyllands-Posten's editor Carsten Juste, and editorial office editor Flemming Rose. They accused the paper of publishing texts and cartoons which were "offensive and insulting" to the prophet. The plaintiffs said the satirical caricatures "attacked believers' honor because they portrayed the prophet as a terrorist criminal and made a clear link between Mohammad, war and terrorism." The groups brought their case citing Denmark's blasphemy and racism laws. AFP

Spouting Aussie Muslim cleric defiant

SYDNEY—Australia's most senior Muslim cleric refused to resign Friday over his Boxing Day sermon without head scarves to "unwanted sexual," saying he would only quit once the world was "clean of the White House." As Prime Minister John Howard, a May 25 ally, called for the Muslim community to act or risk a long-term backlash, Sheikh Taj Aldin al-Hilali once defiled over his comments that scantily-clad women incite rape. After Friday prayers at his mosque in Sydney, the controversial Egyptian-born cleric was quizzed by scores of news reporters over whether he would quit. "When we clean the world of the White House first," Hilali responded, as supporters cheered and applauded loudly. But remarks, Several Australian politicians and some members of the Islamic community have called for Hilali's resignation, but he still enjoys grass-roots support from his followers. AFP

Largest US casualties in Iraq

BAGHDAD—The number of US troops killed in Iraq hit its highest monthly toll for a year on Thursday, as American soldiers pressed ahead with their fight against militants. The newest that four US marines and a sailor were killed Wednesday were after 93 President George W. Bush and Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki insisted their plan to pacify the country was on track. The deaths brought the number of US killed in the first three and a half weeks of the month to 96—more than all any time since October 2004—as US troops faced tough fighting in central regions. AFP

Coup leader warns Thaksin not to return

BANGKOK—The leader of last month's coup again warned ousted prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra Friday not to try to return home, one day after admitting that graft probes against him had made little headway. "We have to be consulted first if Thaksin tries to return," coup leader Sonthi Boonyaratglin told reporters. The remarks echoed comments he made in London days before it was published Thursday, when he admitted investigators had yet to turn up solid evidence to support corruption charges against Thaksin. Sonthi has repeatedly justified the military's April 19 takeover by claiming that rampant corruption during Thaksin's five years in office had undermined democracy. But in remarks The Nation newspaper Thursday that "it will be difficult to implicate him" in major corruption cases. The remarks came amid growing criticism of the junta and rumors that Thaksin might try to return to Thailand from London, where he has lived in self-imposed exile shortly after the coup. AFP

Chinese corruption inquiry intensifies

BEIJING—A widening Chinese anti-corruption investigation is taking aim at the high party leaders, a sign that President Hu Jintao intends to continue removing officials he considers insufficiently loyal, people told about the leadership's planning said. Some 300 Communist Party investigators have been examining property deals and personnel appointments in the capital city since at least late September, and have uncovered suspicious dealings that implicate top Chinese leaders, the people said. Among those seen as likely targets of the inquiry are Jia Qinglin, a member of the seven-member Politburo Standing Committee and a former party secretary of Beijing, as well as the current Beijing party secretary, Liu Qi, who is a regular member of the Politburo. If the investigation results in the removal one or both officials men, it would mark the first major shakeup since the leadership shook up after the 1989 protests. AFP

ANNOUNCEMENT

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INQUIRER

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

FRANKIE Miñoza, still a little ahead of the field

Miñoza six off pace after a 74

HYOGO, JAPAN—FILIPINO STAR FRANKIE Miñoza stumbled to a two-over-par 74 Friday and fell six shots off the pace halfway through the ASC Championship at the ASC Golf Club course here.

Counting his first-round 67, Miñoza posted a 139 and lagged behind new leader Atsushi Ishii, who was at 133 following a 68.

Struggling off his tee, Pete followed his 67 with a round highlighted by an eagle on the 18th hole, in addition to three birdies against a bogey for a one-stroke lead over Katsuyoshi Imai.

Ishii, whose only title in his rapid four-year career as the Asahi Ryokuken Nomad Memorial Open in November last year, birdied the fifth and seventh holes, hiding a 30-footer on the par-5 13th, where he hit a 5-wood from 220 yards to set up his eagle.

He added a birdie on the 15th for nine his lead on no-over stroke with a bogey on the final hole.

"I'm extremely satisfied with my score over the first two days," said Ishii, who is playing in Hyogo Prefecture with an leg after finishing in 43rd place last weekend in the Fumi Classic, a JLPGA event in Florida.

Imai, a two-time winner on the tour, carded eight birdies and two bogeys in a round of 68 for a 136 total in the YUE2000,000 (about P50 million) event.

Two-round leader Yi Ting had a 71 and dropped two third, a further stroke back, followed by Hiroyuki Imai's 67 at 138. Ipsos

Tipon gives RP pugs lone gold in Finland

BANGAMBIGIT JOAN TIPON SAVED THE day for Team Philippines with a masterful 21-7 conquest of Canada's Jake Hicks in the finals as the Filipino settled for a single gold medal at the Tammer Cup International Boxing Championships in Tampere, Finland.

Tipon, banking on his nimble footwork and hi-speed jab tactic, frustrated the taller Hicks to make up for the losses suffered by compatriots Waldo Reyla and Dandrel Basador in other 5-cut bouts.

Light-flyweight Reyla yielded to the rapid-pounding Ad Ilcsik of Hungary, 30-16, while lightweight Basador folded to the bonecrunch and bear-hug assaults of Hungary's Imre Damjanovics.

Basador was ahead by six points in the fourth and final round but was unable to fend off the attacking Gorsai, who forced an 10-16 count and went on to win the gold when the referee was applied.

Team Philippines finished fourth overall with a 1-2-2 gold-silver-bronze tally. France won the overall title with three golds, while Australia and Hungary shared second with two golds each.

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Misamis Oriental, Bukidnon stun foes

DEFENDING CHAMPION TAGAYTAY CITY AND favorite Misamis Occidental suffered losses in the second round of the 2004 National Inter-Provincial Chess Championships at the Amber at the Ambient Hotel in Tagaytay City.

With top board players Grandmaster Joey Antonio taking a rest due to stomach, Tagaytay yielded to host Misamis Oriental, 2.5-1.5.

Grandmaster Eugene Torre overwhelmed opponent, but his teammates failed to deliver as Bebot dropped a 1-1 decision to Bebelyn Dahl.

Edmundo Enriquez won Antonio's place and settled for a draw with IM Ronnie Tolentino. Alcad Bokgabo and Hidilyn Merino conducted the main fall for Misamis Oriental of Gov. Dean Montes by beating Tagaytay's Hermann and Sara Perez on boards 2 and 4, respectively.

Allan Hanabi scored Tagaytay's full point as the opposite of Bernie Yap on board 3.

Team defending National Master Arcelie Robles to their top board clash, but Ferdinand Lopez, Julio Sacnagan and Elmo Bongcaras reclaimed rank victories over Benny Roger Lopez, Joyce Jolden and Blackson Pacanza, in that order, to give Bukidnon a 3.5-0 the victory.

Bukidnon fold- de-Aeon Enrique del Rosario, 3-1, Luis Thursday's opponent while Mich 'B' renamed Virgino Cavabroad, 2.5-1.5.

Meanwhile, GMs Mark Bargas and Nelson Mariano's squad overtook respective members.

Perigan, 22, the country's top player, quadrupled opponent de Ong' N' in a 4-0 whitewash of against old Bayer (Bayaan) while Mariano led Zimbabo to a 3-1 triumph over Tagudan.

Martin Bernardino, Contributor

RP batters get reprieve

LAST CHANCE AT BAT

Philippine Sports Commission chairman Villanueva "Butch" Ramirez yesterday gave the national baseball team one last opportunity to produce results for its Asian Games slot or be stricken off the SEA delegation.

The Philippine Amateur Baseball Association failed to meet yesterday's deadline, set by the Asian Games Task Force, to remit the $50-million needed for the 22-team squad to the Asian island Dec. 1-15.

In Doha, Qatar.

Ramirez, however, decided to give Doha president Hector Calderon, one of the first enthusiasts in baseball in the early years, spoof on the Philippine team's travesty.

Once confirmed, Ramirez declared, [illegible]

"But really want to see baseball lost we don't have the money to spare," said Deputy Chef de Mission Ricardo Garcia. "So the way it looks it, it looks to [illegible]

UNIVERSITY GAMES

FEU equals La Salle feat

By Cedell B. Tayao and Christian Ivi Tan
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY — THREE-TIME TITLIST FEU set Far Eastern U a collision course—and, even as San Beda and La Salle's rankers pulled away from them (both on 3-1) of the National University Games here.

But La Salle also clinched its third title in two by rolling women's football title a three-game sweep, capped by a 6-0 pounding 2-0 victory over Santo Tomas at Mc.G. La Salle pitch.

And by quadruple-gold winners Tessa Mendoza and Merle Jacobeo, 10.00 took the women's title with a 10-gold 9-silver 5-bronze count, followed by St. Jude Thaddeus (5-1-4).

Arena Age Group veteran Christ Legardo of John B. Lacson College Foundation Bacolod also grabbed his share of the limelight, claiming three individual golds and a silver in swimming competition.

Reclaimed Wrightline capped four golds and Edson Dimaguiba coast-themed three more as San Beda retained the men's championship in runaway fashion, fishing over 22 golds, seven silvers and three bronzes, way ahead of De La Salle (13-5-4).

De La Salle's Darlyng De Jesus won a Sta. Rosa sweep by rolling four events, three 37's Jeffrey Lagrimas and Cesky Bolongaro of lowly Uste also won one gold each.

Despite a head-breaking setback in men's athletics, the Tamaraws remained in the top notch in the women's long Games by sending the women's athletics crown, men's badminton and men's table tennis.

College of St. Benilde also seized three titles, taking women's table tennis and posting a sweep of both events in tennis.

Malcom Bernardo spearheaded the Lady Tamaraws' onslaught with five golds in the athletics competition, which saw jumping specialist Myrtle Comsen, Zara delos Virgo, Jenny Agustin chipping in one gold apiece.

Santo Tomas failed to FEU sweep in athletics with quadruple-gold winners Jay Bay Ramos, who also set two meet records, leading the way.

The Tigers' Lud Elna relay squad, led by Ramos, provided the crucial win in Santo Tomas finished with eight golds, six silvers and five bronzes. FEU topped 7 golds, 7 silvers and 2 bronzes.

The Lady Tamaraws were a total of 13 golds, 7 silvers and five bronzes, followed by FEU, which posted a 5-4-0 tally.

In men's badminton, FEU downed local host Riverside College, 2-1, for the crown call in repetitioning to make 2-1 victory against Adamson in the semifinals.

LA SALLE'S Nicole Lacuesta chalks her way to a third gold medalist the 4x50-meter medley relay.

RP golfers blown away in World Am first round

THE PHILIPPINES STRUGGLED IN A LATE, cold, windy afternoon flight and limped home with a 10-over-par 294 Thursday to find leader Canada's Jon Mills ripping apart the field at the 36-hole, 72-par Golf Championships in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Jay Bayron dropped five strokes in the last three holes to settle for a 77, the total output of Michael Allan in the competition's first known as the Eastern Cape.

That terrible start dampened the Filipinos who came into the tournament hoping to shoot for the 70's today's joint 36th effort in this Eagle-Santo Trophy last week.

Another RP team's quest could be heading for a penalty flight.

Marvin Bautista, the spearhead of the squad handed by ICTSI, aided to an 82 and failed to counter to the three-eight, two-to-count format event.

The Philippines, which dented 216 days to the Cup—its first, 2004 edition in Puerto Rico, its 41st place in a record field of 79, to a tie with Bermuda and Venezuela.

The Canadian took advantage of early touch times to fire a five-under-par 139 behind Richard Scott's 66 and Andrew Pett's 70. Canada stood as the only one without a Filipino finish.

France shot a two-under 142 at the De Zalze course for solo third while the United States, champ a fourth straight championship in the international event, carded a 143, as was with top Americans Malaysia, Austria and South Africa.

Tales of the Cuyo and homeboys gone forever

By Percy D. Della

I WOKE UP WITH A HEIST IN MY EYES LAST night! About teenage crime but is crime.

Mona's favorite basketball "brothers" will spoken to respectful terms toward the old basketball.

Where were they now? People ask me everyday of the absence of a sports-inspired franchise called the CESO.

Well, the members and the coach had gone on to finishing this school and the Mo, getting Tim-piter schools for All Saints' Day. But the progressive offshoots allowed the hands under the Cuyo and the homeboys to be gone forever.

The three of you who were youngsters in the late '90s and early '00s, hop along if you recognize, might as well look back with me.

Journey home there there were Cuyo Bachanadies!

Oh, yes, we are talking the basketball league team that really filled the town people with its camaraderie—and chased of play and the rolling center for from the barrios on Saturday (Sight).

That is for outdoor with the money of islands in Palawan, Cuyo stood for the Cuyano United Youth Organizations. Cuyano Native Boys. As all-regional-class about the teams that it's where you only see but colors is cultivated and built school, are necessarily to that color.

Cuyo is the mecca of basketball school enrollees in the game, and especially for a scholarship for carnival.

Most endured the hook shots, jump shots, running shots, acrobatic shots, fast breaks, slow breaks, flying elbows, body checks and muscling under the rim or through a game and by the stuff.

After, do not.

The small town style went rough. Their group was never a stepchart for town-athletic. Gone during sight of youthful indiscretions spotted by Sunshiped, players and their admirers-turned-fans. Even most plans in the detail of night and point back asked for the camera. Those whom who happened to be near have conveniently looked the other way.

But no their gave way to a profound sense of sorrow and the unconfident global to the god sent.

He survived the hardened's hurdles, but we BIG, and died a broken-man. He was the best player not to play in the Hi-Lo and the PBA.

Cuyo, although battered to its total glory, also signalled a process can terribly wondrous—that all good things must come to an end.

They did. Hearts were in. A young age, talks and buffet from time along. The Cuyo Group dreams that once soared eventually plummets, of back to earth reality.

Just like a whole country's snapshot years in a span of ten years that happened to be the 90's, only concession—integrated by the dismal part.

In a famous Marvel Ships, long time ago, there was the Cuyo.

We knew the first time of the team and there: "Cuyo pa ba rin ba kahit kahit kami nito?" (We'll belong to the Cuyo until the grave.)

The Cuyo—where are they now?

Rigardo Domingo Buenaventura, the greatest player ever to play in the PBA, is dead.

Ronnie Cuenca, Jr. is on Air Force level-of-general who presided over the Magsaysay court martial proceedings. He retired recently.

Arlene Agustin, a merchandise engineer, was dismissed contract by Nestasia.

Abelardo Nonnid is retail property in Bakersfield, California.

Johnny Carandang, a former electrical engineer and Douglas school teacher, is dead.

Reagie Cuenca was an operator resort clerk, he, too, is dead.

Eddie Cuenca, studio photographer and learner, is also dead.

Teddy Bello of Domingo, elevator/newspaper captain, still resides in Dumbo Cuenca, Cuyano, Puerto Rico.

Jun del Rosario, Jr. retired as municipal inspector and now lives in Calamansanay City.

Tony Ong, a retired sergeant in the Philippine Air Force, died early last month.

Ramon Cuyno who retired from the United States Navy, is a resident of Oxnard, California.

Theodoro Rungcal, physics science statistician and alternate coach, is private secretary to the mayor of Cuyo.

Ed Gonzales and Raul "Ishoy" del Mundo were the coaches. Gonzales resides in Manila as an attended engineer. Del Mundo is a farmer in Cuyo.

Mary Domingo-Delfo retired her customer-ary. She retired as a state government spokesperson in Sacramento, California.

Original coaches Rey Robles and Lucio Tumaru are very much alive. Robles is in Manila where he is receiving treatment for kidney operations, and Tumaru, a former town councilor, in Cuyo.

Lenny Manuel B. Tuason, who coached the team till its disbandment, is dead.

Tumaru and Tuason, Ed Gonzales and several more coaches the first Cuyo to star for Cuyo. He was battled to death at age 22 on Sept. 6, 1972. He died waiting for a visa to work in the United States as a medical technologist.

Jose Bernardo Burgos and Cuyo comrades. Not was two among bodies for the tournament. If several more members could join national team standard and PBA star. He's covering his last bet in a member of the Manila city government.

Comments to: pd_della@hotmail.com

SportsWatch

Celebrity boxers in 'Bakbakan' Round 2

ACTOR CESAR MONTANO MAKES THE LIST OF CELEBRITIES SIGNING AGAINST BOXING BROADCASTING Company's "Bakbakan III" set 6 p.m. at Rm. 30 at the Star City, starring Lester Llansang, Dong Cry, Montano said ring. It not only professional boxers who throw their hands out in the ring, but celebrities—Pinky Rosales vs. double-dare Lester, Christian Vasquez vs. Alex Hall, and Rommel Blankaso vs. Bobby Garcia. The first Bakbakan '05' held in August. Signed to be more action than the Montano brothers figured in a celebrity-studded audience. Cesar Montano challenged celebrity to a contest after the crowd-debated Cesar's boxing skills. Montano will headline the fight, the first series—an effort in the near future, and Dennis Cesario against Dan Hamilton in the supporting bout.

PCAP Stagfighter of the Year up today

THE STARTING FIELD OF THE YEAR OF THE PHILIPPINE CHAMPIONSHIP ASSOCIATION of the Philippines (PCAP) will be known today when the Grand Championship 9-ring derby gets going at the Makati Coliseum with more than 30 fights out with 10-ring. Derby fees are sponsors Pioneer Kits of Bacoor Bacolod (GEM) Cup Final Bacolod, while cross-town promotions Pioneer Kits (PCAP) and Makati 9-ring derby. Inside the Stagfighter race along with Art Dale (Cebu Pride) with 12 points each. Boy Bacon (Bubble Gang) and Cesar Montano (Pioneer) with 10. Lynette Ray Domingo and Gen. Tony Rivas (TSB Members), Hector Pe (Pioneer Banking) and Ricardo Cruz (Bubble Gang) with three each with 9.5 apiece.

Clean-Up derby today at SJC

A HUNDRED FIGHTS ARE IN STORE IN THE CLEAN-UP 4-STAR DERBY which gets under way at the San Juan Coliseum today with Cagayanon Congressman Jack Enrile as sponsor. Action starts at 1 p.m. with former TJ Manapat Boy Yanos and Cagayan Governor Rene Uy's Cagayan Valley Cup (CVC) Tournament. The main attraction comes 2½ hours Philippine time is expected, recently, when could face brawler Rey Bacon and Ryoko Hiroki for lightweight honors and champion. Majority of today's undercards comes from the Caloocan promotions as well as Malabon, Pampanga, Bistro Inigo, Tarlac and Pangasinan. For inquiries, call 726-5886 or 719-6885.

TOP FLIGHT: Members of Archipelago Tennis Club pose for posterity after ruling the second Filipino-Chinese Friendship Day Team Tennis Tournament in Metro Manila. From left, club president Paulino Pe, Philip Chua, Terence Tedlerson, Tirone Co, Robert de Jesus, President Yu, Anthony Tan, club VP Victoria Co, Joe Sun and Alfonso Ong.

HEAD-TURNER: Louie Cuenca pilots his Lola T70 Replica to third-place win in Race 2.

Sison, Binamira split vintage car honors

SERIES LEADER PHIPPI SISON SPLIT honors with Joey Binamira in the event 2000 San Mig Coffee Vintage Sports Car Cup at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas.

Sison, who topped the last race in Subic, smashed another big shoot at the day-long race to take the checkered flag in 10 minutes and 38.889 seconds to the event organized by the Batangas Racing Circuit and the Manila Sports Car Club.

But it didn't come easy. Sison battled tooth and nail with Binamira at the outset and had to push his Porsche 911 to the fastest ignition of 2:13.025 in the fourth lap to pull away. He finished 14.772 seconds in front of Binamira, who finished 30.46.468.

Romeo Miranda bagged third place while Jr. Jang Lee and Ed Sandy Gonzalez, driving Lucio Montanez Alta, wound up fourth and fifth, respectively.

Binamira, in a jeep-type Super 7, upstaged them in the afternoon race by quickly grabbing the lead at the start and holding on to it for good. He wrapped up the win in 11:05.552 minutes, 11 seconds ahead of Sison.

Binamira posted the day's fastest time of 2:55.674.

Lalo Ignacio, in a Toyota Celica, took third place honors with Jason Cuenca, driving the crowd-favorite Lola T70 Replica, finishing fourth ahead of Romeo Alfonso.

For more details, log on to www.batangasracingcircuit.com.

Veterans lead Silver Cup bid of Titans

By Jasmine W. Pays

WILL THE ADDITION OF VETERANS BE A young team's fall?

Coach Jerry Craddock hopes it does when his heeled up Telehelli Titans see action in the PBL Silver Cup starting Nov. 11.

"We really need veteran players," said Craddock at the lineup at Kanapaan tennis yesterday. "The veterans, unlike colleague players, usually know how to react. Having them also gives us flexibility when it comes to our starting unit."

Consultant Robert Sison said recruitment was among the Titans' focus during the off season.

"We started with the recruitment of players from championship Mercedes," he noted.

Sison, who started the Jewels' title run last year, brought in former stars of Magpayo, Axel Capas, Francis Miranda and Paul Gaserro after Mercedes took a leave of absence from the league this conference.

Other acquisitions from champion squads include point guard Eric Valenzuela from Magpayo, Eugene Tan from Bano at Dilao and Delmer Labagala, who will debut with the Titans after wrapping up his stint with Champions League at Far University of the East.

Black Storm

Craddock also revealed that the Titans will introduce an interesting new uniform called the Black Storm.

"They will be in hard signals," said Craddock, the former Pamboole star named among the 20 all-time best players in the pro league. "It's a quick transition. Some offense to defense, it will depend on ball movement, it's a must and must moves."

Telehelli vice president and general manager Manilk Parekh, board representative Andrew Sisneros and team manager Benjie Castillo believe that the Titans will do better than their four-win debut last conference.

"Our goal this year is to go all the way to the top," said Parekh. "The reason that we're very confident is that we added talents to our team."

Completing the Titans rostered roster are Aldo Caballes, Mel Lacsamana, Dino Villamin, Jay-ar Estrada, Jose Magdalena Jr. and Axel Dionisio.

"Having a veteran lineup makes our job easier," said Craddock. "And with our new system, we'll try not to be predictable."

Montaña leaves Cebu gasping in overtime

DAVAO CITY—MONTAÑA PAWNSHOP DEFEated Cebuana Lhuillier in overtime to score an 89-86 victory in the Davao Sporting Coaching Division basketball tournament Thursday night before a sellout crowd at the Almendras gym here.

Randy Pinarets and Ronald Lanocha combined for 38 of the jewelers' 46 points in the game as pooled to propel Instrumental Armando Qui to expand on its unvanted win in five games.

Reserve veteran John Ostenfel's Cebu team dropped to 3-2.

It was a see-saw battle from the start, with the lead changing hands a record 21 times and the score tying 17 times before Montaña finally broke through in overtime.

Dondon Agnes scored four in the early going to keep the Jewelers in the game.

Montaña still led 55-54 going into the payoff period behind the hot hands of Hayden Legaspi and Lenny Zubiri.

The Cebuanos limited Agnes to two minutes in overtime after regulation ended in 70-all.

The scores:

MONTAÑA (89)—Agnes 10, Pinarets 16, Lanocha 5, Arellano 8, Alonso 5, Arellano 7, Espiritu 2, Carballo 4, Gonzaga 6, Galindez 2, Zubiri 9, Lopez 6.

CEBUANA LHUILLIER (86)—Legaspi 19, Zubiri 19, Bello 13, Ochoa 10, Marquez 7, Ayuda 7, Caramoan 2, Noguera 2, Puentespina 1, Montalvo 2, Redondo, Del Castillo 2.

Quarters: 14-18, 34-36, 68-68, 70-70 (reg), 86-86 (OT).

CATCHER Nadia Medina (left) and Albert Pujols celebrate St. Louis' victory. AP

Little David shines

Cardinals rally, zero in on title

ST. LOUIS—WITH SOME HELP FROM A SOGGY FIELD and a big hit by little David Eckstein, the St. Louis Cardinals took control of the World Series with a wild 5-4 comeback win over the Detroit Tigers on Thursday.

Eckstein's unbreaking double glanced off the glove of a diving Craig Monroe in the eighth inning, and the Cardinals capitalized on Detroit's sloppy defense to take a 3-1 Series lead and move within one win of their first championship in 24 years.

"He's the toughest guy I've ever seen in a uniform," St. Louis manager Tony La Russa said, praising his scrappy shortstop.

Jeff Weaver can nail it down on Friday when he pitches against rookie Justin Verlander at Busch Stadium. Each has his first start in the Series.

"The line here are unbelievable. They came out every single night supporting us and it would be a real honor to do something for them," Eckstein said.

The 5-foot-7 (1.7-meter) Eckstein hit three doubles and a single as St. Louis overcame an early 3-0 deficit to close in on its 10th World Series title. The last team to squander a 3-1 lead, however, was the 1985 Cardinals against Kansas City.

After Wednesday's rainout, only the second World Series weekend in 20 years, showers were expected again on Thursday. But the heavy stuff stayed away on a 50-degree night, and much of the backyard cookout crowd was prayed for a light rain.

The rain got heavier in the sixth, however, and the Tigers began to struggle with the elements.

With St. Louis trailing 3-2 in the seventh, Eckstein hit a drive to right-center that Curtis Granderson appeared to have in his sights before he slipped to the ground, kicking up a huge divot. The ball fell for an easy double.

Pinch-hitter Jo Tapsdal dropped down a sacrifice bunt, and reliever Fernando Rodney threw the ball way over the head of Placido Polanco scoring as Best base, allowing Eckstein to score the tying run.

It was the fourth error by a Tigers pitcher in four games, a record for one pitching staff in the World Series. AP

Same old Heat back to defend NBA crown

MIAMI—GREETER SOUTH Beach parties had dwindled and the lively entertained in coming back, the players' filtered much gave work on his plans for keeping the Heat atop the NBA.

When Riley surveyed his roster, there was Shaquille O'Neal, who looked every one of his 34 years while labouring to a pedestrian 13.7 points per game in the NBA finals. In his reserve roles, he was 28-year-old Dary Payton and 26-year-old Alonzo Mourning.

And Riley decided, despite his aging stars, to do practically nothing.

So back came the same old Miami Heat, who are considered they're still good enough to get by LeBron James and Big Ben Wallace in the East, and then the Dallas Mavericks, San Antonio Spurs, Phoenix Suns or whomever else survives in the West.

Sure, the Heat have Gary Payton, but they're also the only team with Dwyane Wade, a bona fide superstar who's already proven he's capable of leading or overshadowing his team's shortcomings all by himself.

"However the progression or regression of our team based on what happened last year," Riley said recently, "I would say most of the scenarios on the other side of it is a seven-game series, because this is a time-to-the-occasion type of team.

"There's something about them, when it's the right time, and it gets hot and it gets cold sometimes, that they're formidable. I think they deserved that."

So when the NBA announced its composite Spalding ball—no, it's not leather anymore—guys ground up on Halloween night and Monday in Miami to open the NBA season against the Chicago Bulls, you can bet O'Neal will want to tip it to Wade. As long as it's in his hands, the Heat might still be the best in a NBA that lacks a dominant team.

"That guy is pretty good, I mean really, really, really good," Charlotte Hornets assistant Randolf Childress said. "He's getting to the point, and I'm telling you (Steve Nash), but we're going to have to start putting the Jordan rules on him. He's a pretty special player."

There are plenty of them.

In the Bryant boat was either Jordan and LeBron to take a challenge starting one last season, while Steve Nash wants a second straight MVP award in a row to take charges allowed to all master stars to shine.

Wade stands out as the brightest of all after what he did in the finals, turning the Heat's 2-0 deficit against Dallas into a six-game victory and Finals MVP honors, name for him and coming that tagline of NBA's complements: Comparisons to Michael Jordan.

Foreign-flavored Raptors

In Toronto, it's been 21 years since Georg Gervinskas, the Balkan Stinger, became the first foreign-born player in the NBA when then general manager Jerry Colangelo brought him to the Phoenix Suns.

The Olympian's experiment didn't work in 1983, but the gulp between international and NBA landscapes has closed considerably since then. Steve Jerry's son, Bryan, is bringing a whole new level of worldliness to the Toronto Raptors.

Bryan Colangelo drafted a European with the No. 1 pick and hired a European executive in a senior role

—both first in the NBA. Over 100 Raptor home players were plus from the NBA, including a dozen Raptors this in Toronto's history's only exhibition.

American All-Star forward Chris Bosh remains Toronto's best player, but Colangelo has gone global to give his team depth. And the good reasons: An eye to international players how the skills and fundamentals that combines American players lack.

After Jerry Colangelo sold the Phoenix Suns, Toronto beneficiary, who scouted the globe in overhauling a Toronto team that went 27-55 last season. Not a surprise from Bryan Colangelo, who was the Suns' general manager when Phoenix hired European-American coach Mike D'Antoni and acquired Canadian Steve Nash, Frenchman Boris Diaw and Brazilian Leandro Barbosa.

Diaw joins Toronto's No. 1 pick or Italian forward Andrea Bargnani, rookie's Slovenian center Rasho Nesterovic and signed Spanish forward Jorge Garbajosa and Slovenian forward Uros Slokar.

Decade-signed American swingman Anthony Parker—considered the top player on veteran, Anal Towns already had Spanish point guard Jose Calderon and Senegal forward Pape Sow. AP

SHAQUILLE O'Neal is back, Pat Riley (top right) wants in for No. 1 and Dwayne Wade holds the key for the defending champions Miami Heat. AP

GLOUCHKOV

WBL: UST whips De La Salle-Lipa

DEFENDING COLLEGE CHAMPION University of Santo Tomas bounced back in the 2005 Women's Basketball League recently by crushing De La Salle-Lipa, 86-36, at the Ateneo de Naval sports complex.

Former de Manila University diamond Ate Schedule'ole College, 68-40, and Assumption College whipped University of the Philippines Los Baños, 46-31, in the other college games of the four-level tourney organized by the Mike/MST Center.

Pamela Lourdes Cruzate topped De La Salle-Lipa, 56-2, in the elementary event.

In the high school development level, it was School of St. Anthony over JASMC, 56-22. Montessori Integrated School won Annbrielle International School, 28-23. Previously over St. James Academy, 19-17; St. Theresa's over College of San Pedro, 38-22; and Cross Christian over UPIS, 14-7.

The scores:

HS Development

PEPSIS 70—Jones 0, Bautista 4, Policarpio 2, Luna 7, Pineda 2, Pinto 7, Alonzo 8, Barnaga 3, Castro 3, Samson 2, Mapanao 0, Pena 2, Nolledo 0, Quidoncel 2, Vergara 0

ST. ANNES 46—Aquino 0, Francisco 4, Alonzo 6, Ang 0, Aquino 0, Ladrera 0, Medina 2, Montaño 3, Olivares 0, Pinto 0, Valencia 0

Halftime 19-9

College

ATENEO 68—Pascual 11, Santos 10, Andrews 8, Miguel 6, Javier 5, Lenart 4, Tan 2, Tamondi 7, Gutierrez 0, Bagtas 0, Bautista 0, Lorenzana 0, Reyes 0, Tangcuyo 0

ST. SCHOLASTICA'S 40—Nebida 12, Pascual 12, Pineda 11, Gonzalez 2, Esperida 2, Bautista 1, Bautista 0, Garcia 0, Jimenez 0, Lee 0, Mangahas 0, Ramigal 0, Wenida 0, Zalsos 0

Halftime 20-18

Federer advances

BASEL, SWITZERLAND—ROGER Federer won in straight sets to overcome an old rival and eight games to advance to the quarterfinals of the Swiss Indoors on Thursday.

Federer, trying to win his home tennis tournament for the first time, extended his longest winning streak of the year to 23 matches.

"I'm playing unbelievable right now," Federer said. "It take control of the match the way I did today was surprising."

Meanwhile, second-seeded David Nalbandian and third-seeded Fernando Gonzalez both used match points and were last-set tiebreakers to keep alive their qualifying bids for the eight-man Master Cup tournament.

Nalbandian earned a match point to defeat Feliciano Lopez of Spain, 6-7 (4), 6-3, 7-6 (7). Nalbandian can qualify for Shanghai and defend his Masters Cup title by reaching the round's final.

Gonzalez fought off six match points in the final tiebreaker to upset Mardy Fish, 7-6 (5), 6-4, 7-6 (4).

SHARAPOVA

Sharapova gains; injury knocks Pierce out

GRAZ, AUSTRIA—US OPEN champion Maria Sharapova resolved the quarterfinals for the 13th time in 14 tournaments this year, beating Eleni Daniilidou of Greece, 7-5, 6-1, in the Generali Ladies on Thursday.

The 1999 Uzi champ Mary Pierce had to be carried off the court on a stretcher after fainting her left knee in a fall while she was on the brink of beating Vera Zvonareva in the last match of the day.

Sharapova broke Daniilidou at 5-5 in the first set when it started.

"I have played so much tennis lately that I felt a bit exhausted at the start of the match," she said. "But I settled down well after the first set."

Sharapova, who failed to reach the quarterfinals only at the French Open, will play 10th-seeded Ana Ivanovic in the next round.

Pierce led Zvonareva, 6-4, 5-3, had called from a break down in each set and entered three match points when she fell behind the baseline and had to retire.

The left knee injury was a cruel blow for the two-time Grand Slam champion, who was playing only her eighth tournament this year after right knee injuries.

In the quarterfinals, Zvonareva and fourth-seeded Patty Schnyder, who outlived in best wild card Nathalie Dechy of France, 6-7 (1), 6-4, 6-2.

Schnyder, last year's runner-up, led 3-2 before losing the first set. In the second and third she converted all four of her break points.

Serbia's Ivanovic beat Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska, 6-2, 6-2, and Samantha Stosur of Australia outed Kveeline Cup winner, seventh-seeded Anna Chakvetadze, 6-4, 6-4. Stosur plays defending champion Nadia Petrova of Russia next.

Sixth-seeded Arsinoe Jankovic of Serbia battled past Elena Vesnina of Russia, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 6-2, and will face fourth-seeded teenager Nicole Vaidisova on Friday. AP

SPORTS

MY GAMES

Manila sweeps b'minton titles

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MANILA SWEPT THE CITY'S BADMINton gold courtesy of pulsed Brad Macle Kahlil Bell as the host city made the Manila Youth Games national invitational tally its play-ground yesterday.

Bell, representing Legarda Elementary School, triumphed in the 13-under girls singles, doubles and mixed doubles at the San Andres Gym as the Big City athletes padded their medal haul to 49 golds, 34 silvers and 33 bronzes with only two days of action to go.

For all its might, however, Manila got shut out in baseball and softball at the Ethel Mannan Complex.

Rizal Technological University edged Manila, 2-1, for the 10-13 softball big league title, before the host fell to Pilipino premier, 2-1, in the 13-15 softball little league championship.

Bell won the seventh losing Manila, Batchayao and Celestial, twice each. Manila won the titles with 8-4-2 slate.

Batchayao pulled off a surprise 8-2 victory over heavy favorite Tanauan for the 13-15 softball big league title over in Mandaluyong.

DEFENDING City's Christian Magsayo fails to beat the throw to Nueva Ecija's teammate Jay Victoria to clinch third inning of the 13-14 softball gold medal game. INQUIRER

Tanauan, 2-1, for the 11-12 little league baseball championship.

Bell then teamed up with Rochelle Dela Cruz to trounce Quezon City's Donnalyn Hermoso and Carla Montes, 21-17, 21-17, for the girls doubles gold medal.

She then routed Gwelle Joy Zamora of Caraballo City, 21-6, 21-4, to take the singles crown before joining hands with Steven Paul Bahonaita-Jaquez of Davao Sur Bravo and Elmo Jose VII of Pampanga, 21-17, 20-22, 21-1, for the mixed doubles title.

Bahonaita-Jaquez won the boys' singles gold after a 21-10, 21-10, 21-14 rout over Anthony Kyle Gonzales of Mandaluyong.

Counting Thursday's last results, Manila is now ahead in the medal standings with Quezon City holding at second place with its 39-26-24 tally.

Laguna follows at 15-6-8, Baguio City 9-15-10, Cavite City 7-11-7, Mandaluyong 5-11-11) and Taguig City (3-4-7).

Rounding out the top 20 in the overall meet are Pampanga with 4-4-1, Valenzuela City (3-2-2) and Cavite City (3-2-0).

Meanwhile, Justin Taboada stood in on the Most Outstanding Athlete award with the golds for Manila in track and field.

The 15-year-old Justin, son of former marathon champion Justo Taboada, nailed the 800m, 1,500m, 3,000m and shared the gold in the 4x400m and 4x100m relays in the 13-15 category.

AF3 STREET DRIVE. Filipino-Asian Formula Three drivers (from left) Mitrick Barragazon, Dado Pinto, Eddy dela Merced and Tyson Sycoon with their canvas motorcycle 's redhat-painted street drive at the SM Mall of Asia. The event highlights AF3's iconic grand culminating in the last four rounds of the 2006 racing season, on Nov. 4-5, at the Batangas Racing Circuit. Joe is Memorial Speedway Asia goes for a spin round the street in her Subaru.

BUSINESS

Editor Raul D. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

Imports jumped 15.3% in August to $4.89B

Buoyed by increased demand for electronics

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS HIT $4.89 BILLION IN AUGUST, up 15.3 percent from a year ago, as electronics companies bought more foreign-made inputs in anticipation of a sustained growth in global demand for consumer electronics in the remaining months of the year and 2007.

The amount of imports in August brought the total for the first eight months of the year to $33.06 billion, a growth of 13.2 percent from last year.

The country's balance of trade, the difference between exports and imports, ran a deficit of $622 million in August alone, and $2.9 billion in the first eight months. The January-August trade gap was 31 percent lower year-on-year.

"The decline in the trade gap boosted by because a lower trade deficit results

IMPORTS B2

Brittany BEAUTIFUL

A SWISS HAVEN WELCOMES...
THE SCENT OF PINE SURROUNDS, REFRESHES...
COOL AIR WHISPERS...

Photos by George Tapan

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OFWs account for half of Filinvest Land sales

Notes brisk sales of affordable housing units

By Dante L. Lucas

OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) now account for up to half of Filinvest Land Inc.'s sales, and the trend will likely continue in the mid-term future, the company's head said yesterday.

As such, the property developer will continue to focus on serving the needs of this cash-rich niche, Filinvest Land president Joseph M. Yap told reporters.

"At present, between 40 and 50 percent of our sales are attributable to OFWs or their relatives here," he said. "Mostly, they buy our affordable housing and lower mid-level housing units."

Filinvest Land's supervisor with the OFW community echoes that of other property developers in the country, many of which are now counting on the rising affluence of overseas workers for their sales.

Other firms like blue chip Ayala Land Inc., Robinsons Land Corp. and Megaworld Corp. have gone to the extent of setting up sales offices abroad to better capture the OFW market.

Yap said he sees assurance of the extent by which the rest of the real estate industry now depends on OFW money, but said that he expected Filinvest Land to continue counting on this sector for revenues.

"That's why we will continue to focus on our core business, which is affordable housing," he said.

Yap pointed out that OFW buyers were most interested in Filinvest Land's housing projects that sell from P750,000 to P3.5 million a unit.

The demand from OFWs is also contributing to the buoyancy of the local real estate market, which he positioned would continue its run-up for the "foreseeable future."

The confidence of the Cojuangco-owned firm in the sector is underscored by statistics showing that more than two-thirds of Filipinos still do not own their own homes.

"With 20 to 30 percent of the population have their own homes," he said.

Yap added that the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council also announced a backlog of anywhere between 3.3 million and 4 million residential and low-cost housing units in the country.

Meanwhile, it was recently reported that Filinvest Mahang Inc. increased its stake in Filinvest Land to roughly 37 percent from 30 percent after an asset-for-share swap deal.

Yesterday, Filinvest Land's stockholders approved an increase in its authorized capital to P47 billion from P6 billion to accommodate the issuance of shares to Hi and the conversion of 6.6 billion shares to the company's parent firm, Filinvest Development Corp. (FDC).

After the conversion of debt into Filinvest Land shares and the completion of an asset-for-share swap, FDC will trim its holdings in the property developer to about 35 percent from 44 percent.

Filinvest Land earlier announced it was buying controlling interests in three key pieces of property for P12.3 billion that will allow it to tap into the high growth mall and business process outsourcing sectors.

These properties are two PhCom Tower in Makati City; Starmall Imperial and Starhigher Cybertower both in Mandaluyong City.

THE DEMAND from OFWs is contributing to the buoyancy of the local real estate market.

METRO PACIFIC

METRO PACIFIC

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS OF METRO PACIFIC CORPORATION

For inquiries about MPIC or the Tender Offer, please dial the MPIC Tender Hotline at toll-free telephone no. 1-800-10-886-8888

Motorcycle firms raise alarm over counterfeit parts, bikes

By Rainier W. Dumlao

LOCAL MOTORCYCLE MAKERS have expressed concern over the counterfeiting of spare parts and trademark violations, which they said could get worse if left unchecked.

Reynaldo Salmalin, counsel for the Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association, said in a briefing yesterday that there was a "growing inclination" of rampant counterfeiting of products that touch on its significant common frames for legitimate firms.

Salmalin added that another violation was the abuse of companies' trademarks to confuse buyers into thinking that copycat products were real.

He said infringement of the companies' intellectual property rights has resulted in 5-7 percent of foregone revenues.

"This is still a new road but it may increase if it goes unabated," he said.

Officials said MDPPA was embarking on an awareness campaign about the issue, in consonance with regional efforts of the Federation of Asian Motorcycle Industries and the Japan Automotive Manufacturers Association.

The six-member MDPPA includes four shareholders of Japanese-founded motorcycle like Honda, Suzuki, Kawasaki and Yamaha.

The other two entry brands MCX and Rusi.

In terms of sales, MDPPA president Eduardo T. Cruz said the group had posted a 7-percent growth in the nine months ending September.

But Cruz said they do not expect to reach their growth target this year of 31.6 percent, which translates to the sale of 370,000 units by yearend.

"We may be able to sell only 320,000 units but total or an increase of only 13.5 percent from 910,388 to 2005," he said. "We are selling at a range of 42,000 to 43,000 units monthly."

Officials said that aside from the awareness campaign, offended firms have pursued cases in the courts as well as with the giant judicial body Intellectual Property Office.

Salmalin'ed, who is also with Honda Philippines Inc., said the company has had cases resolved favorably in court and that it hoped to achieve the same results with the remaining cases.

He said most of the cases involved the Honda trademark, and that counterfeit products were made locally as well as shipped in from abroad.

BIR offers tax compromise to Duty Free

By Michelle V. Rama

KUNDO

THE BUREAU of INTERNAL REVenue has offered Duty Free Philippines a compromise settlement for the P1.4 billion tax liabilities of the latter, hoping to speed up resolution of the tax dispute and therefore boost revenue collection.

Nydson Rojas, director of the BIR's Makati region, said that under the compromise offer, Duty Free would be required to pay only the basic tax of P1.3 billion and the penalty of P100 million would be waived.

The P1.4 billion is alleged tax liabilities of Duty Free involved value-added tax and customs duty income tax for 2001 and prior years, Rojas said.

Duty Free maintained that it should not be obliged to pay taxes because it is a government entity. Revenues generated by Duty Free is used partly to finance programs related to the promotion of tourism by the Department of Tourism, head agency of Duty Free.

The BIR, however, said that although Duty Free is a government-owned firm, it was not mandated to provide government services but only operated as a business that is profit-oriented. Duty Free should therefore pay taxes, the BIR said.

The tax dispute is currently pending with the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA).

"Dare Duty Free? Don't pay the tax or not, we will immediately drop the case," Anje told reporters yesterday at the sidelines of the launching of a tax collection enhancement campaign in Duty Free City.

Rojas should Duty Free decline the compromise offer, then the BIR would pursue the case with the CTA. If the BIR wins, then we will collect the entire P1.4 billion," Anje said.

The BIR's Makati region covers the economic districts of Makati, where Duty Free's office is located, Pasay, Las Piñas, Taguig and Pateros.

Last year, Duty Free gave P476 million to the BIR as payment to end the tax dispute. Although the BIR Makati region accepted the payment, the BIR's head office turned down Duty Free's offer.

Since the P476 million was already remitted as part of the BIR Makati region's collections last year, Anje said, the amount would just have to be deducted from whatever they will collect from Duty Free, if ever the latter decides to accept the compromise offer or should the CTA rule in favor of the BIR.

Anje said the compromise offered to Duty Free was in line with the BIR's ongoing abatement program, under which taxpayers with assessed undisputed taxes and pending tax-related civil cases could have their cases dropped if they agree to pay the basic amount of the back taxes.

The abatement program is aimed at hastening the resolution of tax disputes that have long been pending in courts.

Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag earlier described the program as "another step toward reducing the bureau's unpaid receivables and pending assessments."

Imports jumped 15.3% in August to $4.89B

From page B1

is a higher economic growth," said Benita Ferrer, director for policy and planning at the National Economic and Development Authority.

One way of comparing gross domestic product (GDP), the economy said used to measure an economy's performance, is by summing up total consumption, investments, government spending, and the difference between exports and imports.

Arroyo said the surge in imports indicated optimism on the part of the country's exporters about business prospects in the coming months. A substantial part of the country's imports are raw materials, mostly electronics components, for the production of export items.

Documents from the National Statistics Office showed that electronics accounted for 44.6 percent or $2.18 billion of total imports in August, an increase of 12.9 percent from last year.

Arroyo noted a report by the US-based semiconductor industry association (SIA) that the bullish growth in demand for electronics so far seen this year was expected to continue in 2005 despite projections of a slowdown in the US economy next year.

SIA said Asian and European economies would join the United States next year to drive the growth in demand for consumer electronics, including laptop computers, MP3 players, cellular phones and televisions with Asian-added.

Following electronics in the top imports for August were mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials with $944.16 million, up by 41.8 percent from a year ago. The growth was driven by higher spending for petroleum, gas and diesel oil, the NSO said.

Industrial machinery and equipment were the third biggest imports at $336.75 million, up 3.6 percent year-on-year.

The Philippines' biggest source of imports for August was the United States, which accounted for $747.71 million. Japan followed with $591.06 million. Other top import sources were Saudi Arabia ($498.32), Taiwan ($427.34 million), Singapore ($397.96 million), Korea ($332.16 million), China ($309.26 million), Thailand ($305.52 million), Malaysia ($197.82) and Hong Kong ($174.24 million).

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

Metro Pacific Investments eyes infrastructure projects

Makati Med, Maynilad among targets

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

METRO PACIFIC INVESTMENTS CORP. THE main debt-free holding firm that will replace Metro Pacific Corp. of Hong Kong conglomerate First Pacific Co., is looking at strategic sectors that will contribute to social infrastructure such as hospitals, energy, water utilities and toll roads, MPIC president Jose Ma. Lim Lim-co Ua told reporters yesterday.

Lim said MPIC would study a possible investment in Makati Medical Center once the hospital's new planning to issue P500 million in convertible bonds to interested investors materializes next month. The debt notes will be converted possibly into a 20- to 25-percent equity in MMC and make the holder of the notes the single biggest stockholder of the hospital.

About 75 percent of MMC is owned by the Ilusos and Aramoro families while 5 percent is held by the San Miguel Corp. (SMC) group.

Lim also said that MPIC would look into the healthcare or related industry but noted that there were no immediate plans to invest in those sectors.

MPIC is also considering at a possible investment in water utilities through MPIC's joint bid with the Consorcio for Manila Water Services Inc., Hyundai Inch for the water utility will be opened on Nov. 7.

MPIC recorded its tender offer screenshot to some 1,200 minority shareholders.

MPIC earlier received approval from major MPIC shareholders Metro Pacific Holdings Inc., Metro Pacific Resources Inc., Metro Pacific and First Pacific International Ltd. to acquire 7.01 billion common shares in MPIC.

The shares will be acquired using a four to one share swap or one MPIC share for every four MPC common shares, documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) showed.

MPIC was founded as a corporate vehicle to strategically accelerate the growth of MPC's former real-estate development subsidiary Landco. MPIC acquired 51 percent of the equity interest of MPC in Landco for P667.7 million.

To support the expansion of Landco's businesses, MPIC will issue P2 billion through a private placement of its shares to Metro Pacific Holdings Inc. or Metro Pacific Resources Inc.

A TRADER at the Philippine Stock Exchange floor takes orders from clients as investor interest in local stocks continued its push prices higher, with foreigners fueling the buying frenzy. EDWARD KIMAYAS

Net foreign stock purchases surge 108%

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FOREIGN INVESTORS' PURCHASES OF LOCAL stocks rose sharply in the first nine months, helped largely by improved sentiment due to government efforts to control the gaping budget shortfall.

From January to September, net foreign buying at the Philippine Stock Exchange increased by 108.8 percent to P42.2 billion from P20.2 billion in the same period last year, PSE president Francis Lim said yesterday.

Total foreign buying for the nine-month period rose 22 percent to P226.6 billion from P171.7 billion in the same period in 2005.

Total foreign selling, on the other hand, was up 22 percent to P184.4 billion from P151.5 billion in January to September last year.

The PSE stated in a monthly report issued in September that inflation continued to be tame as it slid to 5.7 percent from 6.2 percent in August. This was the lowest since the 5.6 percent recorded in August.

Robust revenue collections and restrained spending also allowed the national government to record a P34.3-billion budget surplus in August, bringing down the year-to-date deficit to P84.2 billion from P86.8 billion the previous year, the PSE said.

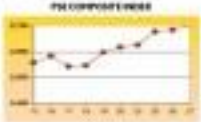
Average daily value turnover for the stock market – a measure of total trades in a day – improved 11.7 percent from January to September to P1.9 billion from P1.7 billion a year ago.

Total value turnover for the first nine months also grew 11.7 percent to P363.7 billion from P325.6 billion in 2005. The growth was fueled by gains in all sectors (77% percent) and transportation (more 1634 percent).

Total market capitalization or the value of all listed firms' capitalization grew 9.24 percent to P6.5 trillion at the end of September from P5.95 trillion at the end of December last year.

Stocks continue to climb

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



OCTOBER

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 9.73-PERCENT higher yesterday, lifted by optimism that corporate earnings will remain strong as the economy partake its growth over the year, brokers said.

This positive sentiment spilled into the currency market, with the peso jumping to its strongest level in nearly five years in early trading, they said.

The composite index added 19.49 points to 2,704.37 after trading between 2,703.61 and 2,661.96. The broader all-share index rose 12.02 to 1,661.66.

Gainers led losers 64 to 46 with 60 unchanged. Turnover totaled 2.67 billion shares worth P1.71 billion.

"Investors are now looking beyond the third-quarter corporate results. I think full-year earnings are also being priced in this early," said Harry Lin of Valenti Investories.

"We're here in pricing a pullback given the strong surge in the past few days, but the momentum has not fizzled out," he added.

The government is confident the economy will expand between 5.5 percent and 6.1 percent this year, supported by brisk exports which grew 15.9 percent year-on-year to $9.954 billion dollars in the first eight months of 2006.

Property developer Megaworld Corp., the most actively traded stock, rose 15 centavos to P2.25.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT)-tipped up P50 to P3,150.

Ayala Land Inc., which will also announce its quarterly results only next month, was up 50 centavos at P19.50.

AFP

SCIENCE/HEALTH

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Editor Cesar O. Mangosing

Text us your feedback: Inquirer has started text messaging on 2227 (Globe) or 3817 (Smart).

Stopping prediabetes on its track

By Charles E. Bakan

RECENT HEALTH statistics indicate that there are over three million (type 2) diabetics in the country and it's safe to estimate that there are just as much a number of Filipinos who are undiagnosed or who doesn't know they are diabetic.

According to endocrinologist Mary Anne Lim-Abraham, professor in the University of the Philippines' College of Medicine, something these two figures would give us an estimate of how many Filipinos are suffering from a prediabetic condition (borderline blood sugar level) or the stage before one may develop type 2 diabetes.

"Many of them have no symptoms, so they are mostly undiagnosed. If we aren't do anything to stop or at least delay the progression of their current condition, they may be headed down the road to diabetes and would just be fulfilling the Department of Health prediction that by year 2025, there would be around 6.4 million Filipinos who would be diabetic," Abraham reminds.

The doctor says the continuous rise of obesity, inactivity and genetics is responsible. But many people with prediabetes aren't aware they have it and many people may be reluctant to get tested—and labeled—especially if they're feeling fine.

Lifesaver

But catching the condition before it turns into full-blown diabetes can be a lifesaver.

An international study called Diabetes Reduction Assessment with Ramipril on Glucose) found that administering the drug ramipril can be for those years, prevented 62 percent of them from progressing to diabetes and helped 76 percent of them get back to normal glucose levels.

The drug, marketed by Glaxo-SmithKline as Ramdiclhexi, is already being prescribed for diabetics.

Less ability

People with type 2 diabetes either lose the ability to respond to insulin, or their bodies no longer make enough of the hormone. Insulin helps the body use glucose as fuel, so without it sugar builds up in the bloodstream.

"Over time, especially if blood sugar levels are not kept in check, diabetics can incur a person's risk of heart disease and cause damage to the eyes, kidneys, nerves and other body tissues," Abraham warns.

She adds that prediabetes is like the yellow light in a traffic signal that tells one to take caution. But in one may choose to stop and prevent any accident than one may ignore into should be or she attempts to beat the red light.

Prediabetes screening

Abraham recommends that those aged 35 and above could benefit from a prediabetes screening, particularly obese individuals and those with other risk factors (see box and article).

And what should one do if diagnosed with prediabetes result-ing?

Abraham, who is also director of the Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity, suggests they have to see a doctor twice a year and meet with a dietitian and an exercise physiologist to learn how to become fit and to eat thoughtfully.

Through Abraham recommends diet and exercise for prevention, she also believes diabetes is not dangerous an epidemic to delay the use of any preventive drugs like sulfonylureas.

"In the absence of any intervention, millions more of Filipinos will soon diabetic in the next five years. Drugs like sulfonylureas, along with lifestyle changes, may stop these individuals from developing diabetes," says the doctor. She explains that while the drug is only being prescribed for diabetics at the moment, a doctor may, after examining the patient's medical history and current condition, do an off-label prescription for the drug.

Are you at risk?

SHOULD YOU BE EVALUATED FOR PREDIABETES, DR. MARY Anne Lim-Abraham suggests the following self-inventory-cum-risk-assessment. If you would benefit from prediabetes testing.

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, particularly to more than one, you may be at risk.

- Do you have a family member with type 2 diabetes or heart disease?
- Are you overweight or obese?
- Are you 35 or older?
- Do you have high blood pressure?
- Do you have "apple-shaped" weight distribution, meaning your excess weight is more around your belly rather than your hips? You have this condition, if your waist is about 90 cm (35.5 inches) for males, or above 80 cm (31.5 inches) for females.
- If for women who've had childhood (3d) you develop diabetes during pregnancy or have a baby who weighed more than eight pounds at birth?

Invitation to a program of excellence

CALLING ALL TALENTED HIGH SCHOOL students! Are you good in math? Do you want to improve your skills? How about experiencing our country in international competitions? Come and join the Program of Excellence in Mathematics (PEM).

In 1989, PEM was launched by Ateneo math professor Dr. Jose Maniquiz and the Departments of Science and Technology. Since 2006, the PEM has been solely funded by the Science Math Department. The objective of PEM is to discover and encourage gifted high school students by training them in various math topics such as Number Theory, Combinatorics, Advanced Euclidean Geometry, Algorithms and Computing. The program also serves as a training ground for participants for the Asian Pacific Mathematical Olympiad (Apmo) and International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO).

The PEM has various activities for high school students and teachers, such as the laboratory training of students from public and private high schools. This year, the program will begin on Nov. 11 and will run for 14 Saturdays, from 9 to 11 a.m. A minimal fee will be collected to pay for the instructional materials.

Interested participants may contact Dr. Jumels Salvinia at pem@math.ad-

EUREKA!

Queenie N. Lee-Chua

meneo.edu.ph or telefax 426-6123. Participants should preregister by Nov. 4. Due to limitations on facilities, we will be able to accept only 200 students. Students will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Aside from the regular classes in PEM, some participants will receive special training for the IMO and Apmo. In order to qualify for this special training, interested students are urged to submit solutions to as many of the following qualifying questions. (Make your solutions as detailed as possible. The solutions must reach Dr. Salvinario by Nov. 11. Send your solutions or Dr. Jumela Salvinario, the-oec-do Manila University Mathematics Department, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Or e-mail your solutions to her at pem@math.ad-meneo.edu.ph. Visit the website www.math.ad-meneo.edu.ph/pem for more details.

Qualifying Questions

1. Find all right triangles with integer sides (angles such that their area and perimeter are equal.

2. Solve in positive integers: $20xy + yz + xz = 4xyz$.

3. Let a, b, c be positive real numbers such that $abc = 1$. Prove that

$$\left(a-1+\frac{1}{b}\right)\left(b-1+\frac{1}{c}\right)\left(c-1+\frac{1}{a}\right) \le 1.$$

4. Let ABC be a triangle inscribed in a circle of radius R, and let P be a point in the interior of ABC. Prove that

$$\frac{PA}{(PC)^2}+\frac{PB}{(CA)^2}+\frac{PC}{(AB)^2} \ge \frac{1}{R}.$$

Kidney cancer

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

LUIS H., A 59-YEAR-OLD HIGH school teacher, noticed that he has been gradually losing weight, around 2.0 lb over a six-month period. He attributed this to his diabetes and thought it might be a good thing that he was shedding some pounds. His doctor drew his attention to almost two liters of urine for more than a week before he sought consultation. He thought his urine was just increased because he didn't drink enough water. He also had a vague but bothersome right-sided flank pain so he decided to see his doctor.

A thorough work-up was done including a CT (computerized tomography) scan, noting an enhancing right kidney mass. Luis H. underwent surgery to remove the kidney and the tumor. Luis H. like the world saved in an hour-where his doctor told him he had kidney cancer, and based on the other laboratory examinations, it has already spread to his other organs.

Kidney cancer, progresses and lung cancer are frequently resistant about, but we don't get to read or hear much about kidney cancer. It is not that infrequent though. The prevalence is one in 10,000 and many are dying due to the type of cancer yearly. If detected early, a complete cure can be obtained with surgery. Unfortunately most cases are discovered when the cancer has already spread outside the kidney.

Classic triad

The classic triad of sign and symptom consists of hematuria (blood in the urine), flank pain and an abdominal mass. This triad is observed in less frequently present when the patient first sees his doctor. In any component of the triad should always be given the benefit of a doubt and kidney cancer must be ruled out.

Other signs suggestive of kidney cancer may include:

- Abnormal urine color (dark, rusty, or brown)
- Fatigue/paleness of one (anemia) (the left kidney is the main source of the left gonadal vein by tumor invasion)
- Weight loss of more than 10 percent of body weight without any weight-reducing intervention.
- Pathologic fractures due to bone metastasis

MEDICAL FILES

Most frequent type

In many instances, kidney cancer is diagnosed as an accidental finding on a medical imaging study of the abdomen (CT scan) done for other reasons. Renal cell carcinoma (RCC) is the most frequent type, present with signs and symptoms not directly due to the mass but due to associated tumor endocrinologic activity. This is called the paraneoplastic phenomenon associated with renal cell carcinoma and includes rhinin abnormalities, pallor or plethora, excessive hair growth in females, constipation and cold intolerance.

The exact cause of kidney cancer is not known, but a hereditary factor is associated with it, particularly RCC. Smoking also greatly increases the risk for developing kidney cancers. Kidney disorders that require dialysis for treatment have also been reported to increase the risk for developing RCC.

Treatment

Surgery can be curative if the cancer is detected early. If the tumor is localized in the kidney it can be cured in 90 percent of the time with surgery. The involved kidney is usually removed completely and no longer has the normally kidney's functioning normally, it should be enough to sustain the patient for life without requiring dialysis.

Surgical resection is no longer advised for patients with distant spread or metastases (such as to the bone, liver, or brain). In such instances, the kidney cancer must be treated with chemotherapy and other treatments.

A promising drug for advanced or metastatic renal cell carcinoma is sunitinib (Sutent), which was approved by the United States FDA early this year. It has also been approved for cancer of the stomach and intestines called gastrointestinal stromal tumor. The drug deprives the tumor cells of the blood and nutrients needed to grow. Fortunately for patients with these types of tumor, sunitinib is already available here.

Other drugs such as alpha interferon and interleukin-2 (IL-2) have also been reported to be modestly successful in reducing the growth of some renal cell carcinomas, including some with metastasis.

1 out of 4 Filipino suffer from constipation

By Tessa R. Salazar

ARE YOU STRAINING THIS EVENING while sitting in a toilet bowl? In fact, have you been reading this paper from cover to cover without a bit of stooping?

If so, then you must be one out of four Filipinos who suffer from constipation. Survey says one out of four Filipinos who have suffered constipation did so in the past 12 months at least once. This is also based on 15- to 64-year-old range, according to the survey. 84 percent of Filipinos do not seek treatment for constipation.

The 2006 Unigo and Activole findings among 500 Filipinos suffering of constipation by pharmaceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim (manufacturer of the laxative Dulcolax) was revealed recently at a press conference.

Highest number

The local survey shows that the highest number of constipation sufferers were in the 36- to 50-year-old age bracket (30 percent of sufferers) and 50- to 64-year-old range (31 percent). The affluent-socio-economic-demographics—the highest number being in the Visayas Cmarket.

The study also indicates 40 percent of sufferers as "severely" to "very severely" constipated. Martina Krip, director for consumer health care of Boehringer Ingelheim Philippines, says that this was when the respondents rated among themselves on a score ranging from "not affected" to "severely affected."

Severe type

Dr. Benjamin Gonzales A. Reyes, MD, a fellow of the Philippine Society of Gastroenterology, describes the severe type of constipation could impair a person's life, as the sufferer would not be able to work or even go out of the house.

Experts define constipation as generally a condition where the person experiences fewer than three bowel movements a week, and who have to physically strain themselves severely in order to defecate. Constipated people also produce harder lumps inside.

Reyes adds that the condition of constipation also depends on what the person eats finds the opposite that if a person's long-standing habit area to move his/her bowels once a week and he or she doesn't feel anything unusual, then that habit would be normal for that person.

Normal amount

On the normal amount of defecation, Reyes says that ordinarily, one go at the toilet produces 100 to 200 grams a day. He adds that even if the person defecates only a small amount, but if he or she doesn't feel straining, then it might still be normal.

Constipation occurs when the normal muscle actions in the colon (large intestine) fail to work properly, and the waste material cannot be eliminated normally.

The Boehringer Ingelheim omnibus survey, which involved 14,000 respondents in the United States, South Korea, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Brazil and Italy, also revealed that 32 percent of the world's population suffered from constipation.

The highest incidences of constipation occurred in Asia Pacific (37 percent). The reasons were given why this region had the highest number.

Treatment options cited are bulk-forming laxatives, plant-derived laxatives, saline or osmotic laxatives, sugar- and alcohol-based laxatives, enemas laxatives and stool softeners. Major treatment options cited include surgery, which may need to be directed at a specific cause, such as rectal prolapse.

BSP sets prepaying trend

Private firms now hope to pre-terminate their debts

By Evan C. Dumlao

PRIVATE BORROWERS HAVE TAKEN their cue from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas decision to prepay this year around 145.2billion worth of foreign debts ahead of maturity to take advantage of the cheaply appreciating peso.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday told reporters the policy-making Monetary Board had approved the application of some private companies to pre-terminate their external debts.

Tetangco said the sum of debts to be retired amounted to "a few hundred million dollars."

There are other pending applications, but Tetangco said it would be better to let the companies make their own announcements.

He said the increasing appetite to prepay external debts even among private borrowers was driven by their desire to generate interest savings.

The BSP approved the third tranche of prepayment worth $215 million of terms loans, bringing to $1.17 billion the total amount of debts set to be retired ahead of maturity for this year.

Last April, the BSP pre-terminated $500 million worth of debts and another tranche worth $460 million was approved for repayment ahead of maturity earlier this month.

The third tranche of prepayment will be consummated next month.

The BSP's own prepayment of debts is part of its external debt management.

The use of strong foreign inflows to prepay debts indirectly helps reposition its foreign-exchange portfolio.

BSP Deputy Governor Jesus Gonzales said the national government would also like to prepay its debts, but it did not have the same flexibility as the BSP because most of the sovereign borrowings were in the form of bond floats.

But the BSP borrows mostly in the form of syndicated loans so there is leeway to pre-terminate without incurring penalties.

The BSP's moves followed last month's announcement that it would prepay $3.2 billion worth of its own obligations with the International Monetary Fund.

Cebu Pacific won't be going Oasis' way, yet

By Riza T. Olchondra

CEBU PACIFIC AIRWAYS INC. (RAU SO) does not for now intend to follow the trail of Oasis Airlines—a new budget carrier offering long-haul flights—and has decided to wait and see whether the Hong Kong airlines' business strategy will work out.

"The market is growing enough to accommodate different types of services. [Long haul/short flights] are not part of Cebu Pacific's business model," according to airline president and CEO Lance Gokongwei before Oasis' inaugural flight from Hong Kong's Chek Lap Kok airport to London's Gatwick Airport on Thursday. "However, the entire LCC [low-cost carrier] model is looking at that aspect now to see if it will work."

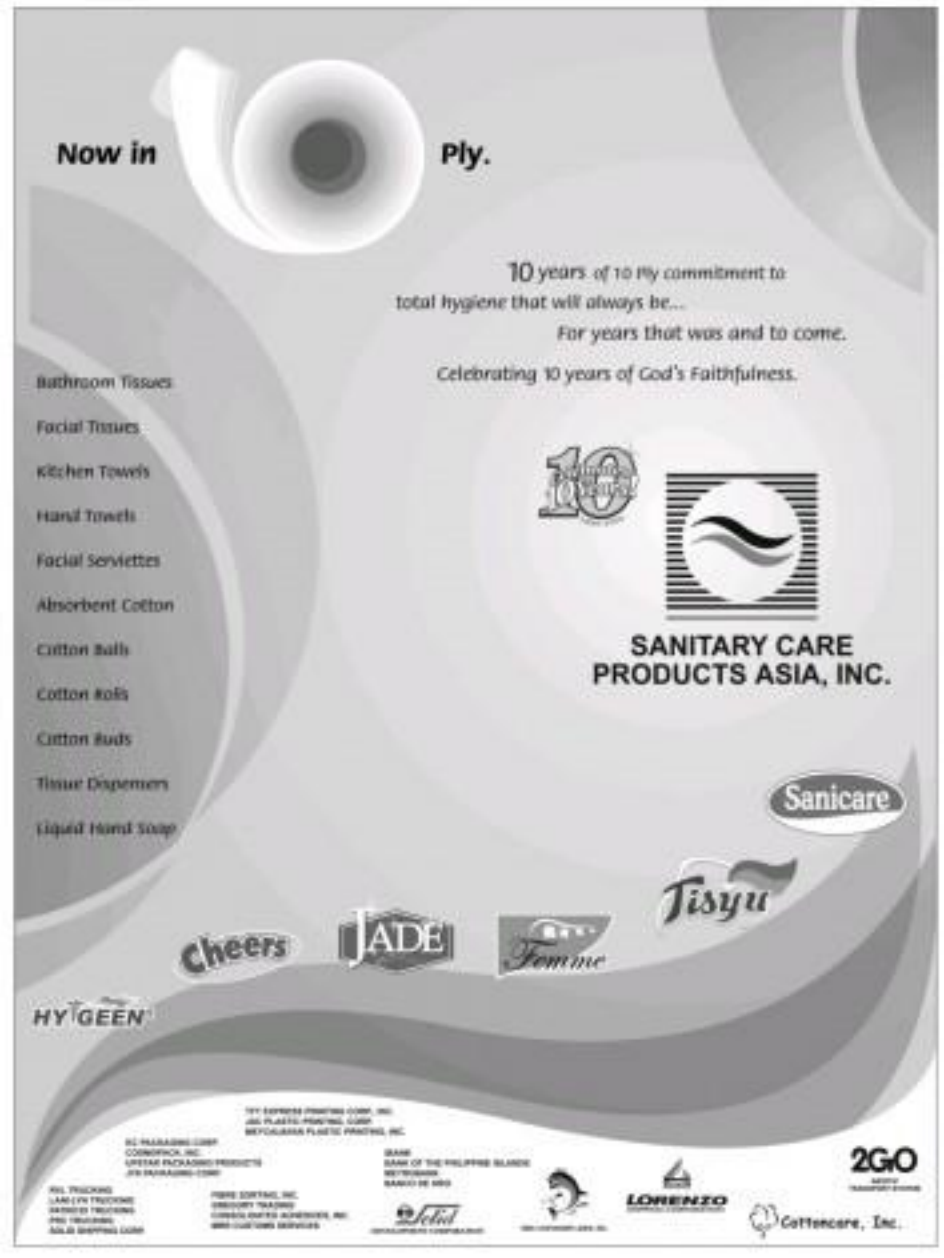
Gokongwei told reporters that Cebu Pacific's fleet of Airbus 320s are technically unable to fly outside the Asia-Pacific region due to their four-hour flying radius. This limits the Philippine budget carrier's range to as far as North Asia, where the location markets are China, Japan and South Korea.

Gokongwei also stressed that Cebu Pacific does not expect to lose out on anything by sticking to its short-haul flights—that offer more value for money to its target market—instead of offering long-haul flights to the United States or the United Kingdom.

"We are comfortable with our business model at this point," Gokongwei said.

Cebu Pacific is focused on budget fliers and threatens passengers traveling within the Philippines and to the rest of Asia-Pacific, such as Bangkok.

The airline recently offered P1,000 one-way for flights from Manila to Bangkok during the period coming Dec. 14, 2006 to Jan. 31, 2007.



PROPERTY

Editor Cesar D. Mangosong

Should you first investigate for paranormal activity?

By Tessa R. Salazar

HOMES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE abodes of comfort and security. But sometimes, unexplainable events—"freaky things up."

Members of Discovery Channel's "A Haunting" watch every week mysterious eyewitness accounts of American families, whose lives were adversely affected by homes "inhabited" by paranormal entities.

There are stories of floating objects, closed doors suddenly swinging open, occupants physically harmed, relationships warped and forever psychologically scarred from such violent hauntings.

Families who own haunted houses are often shown escorting supernatural investigators, most of whom treat the cases from a scientific standpoint.

In the Philippines, there is also a group of paranormal investigators who treat such occurrences scientifically. And yes, homeowners have sought the group's services, much like how one would seek the recommendation of an engineer for possible structural weaknesses in a house.

Professional investigative service

Jaime T. Linsangan, a scientific investigator of paranormal occurrences, heads the Philippine Paranormal Group servicing homeowners around the country. According to Linsangan, professional investigative service is granted to those who would seek its help, on the condition the case be treated scientifically.

Linsangan says that a property must be verified by the group as truly haunted, and there are times that the owners merely tell an imagined things, borne out of fear of the possibility that their property might be haunted. "If they want it investigated, then we will find out," he says.

Cleansing

If the house has been purchased and verified to be haunted, Linsangan says the house can still be "cleansed" before it is an "empty point of the elements." If that were the case, Linsangan says, it will be difficult to cleanse the house. Its "entry point," in paranormal lingo, is a gateway of demonials.

Linsangan cites as an example a big company that occupied a prominent property in Makati (formerly occupied by a consul of another country). Two years after occupying the Makati property, the businesses went down. Linsangan says that when the Philippine Paranormal Investigators were there, they found many abnormals, and the yard was an "entry point."

Linsangan says he then advised the company to vacate the area. The company followed his advice and transferred the office still in the form of feng shui. Feng shui doesn't talk about ogres," he says.

According to him, people are now more aware of the paranormal and are now more careful in dealing with their environment. Linsangan observes that homeowners are asking the group to investigate on a property first before the owners do anything with it, such as cut trees.

"It happened in Batangas when an entry point was consumed. The elements retaliated, so they had to remove the cemetery."

Linsangan also tells of a high-end subdivision in Quezon City that had many of its residents abruptly coming down with serious illnesses, with some even dying from them. After an investigation by Linsangan's group, it was finally out that when the place was being bulldozed during development, many elements were affected. The elements were retaliating when the illnesses occurred.

Skepticism

Linsangan says his group has handled a number of documented cases, and the only thing he's tired of is the skepticism constantly accompanying him.

"If they don't want to believe it, as he is. I'm not here to convince people." He also stresses that the only thing the group is after is the truth. He don't exaggerate, and we cannot ignore the spirit world."

Linsangan says his clients are almost always individual homeowners, not real estate brokers. "Real estate brokers are still in the level of feng shui. Feng shui doesn't talk about ogres," he says.

According to him, people are now more aware of the paranormal and are now more careful in dealing with their environment. Linsangan observes that homeowners are asking the group to investigate on a property first before the owners do anything with it, such as cut trees.

Telltale signs

So how would you know that your abode is inhabited by beings other than what you see? Linsangan said the presence of elementals such as a dwarf could manifest in material objects disappearing and reappearing in another spot; an earthly animal, "peripheral" sightings—you make out a figure at the corner of your eyesight, but when you direct your gaze at the spot, there's nothing there. Manifestations of a spirit include lights turning on and off, doors locking on their own, or a feeling of a presence that causes your hair to stand on end, and nervousness.

As of press time, Inquirer Property has not found any homeowner or real estate broker willing to go on the record for paranormal encounters. Truth, it seems, is indeed stranger—and harder to accept—than fiction.

The Paranormal Investigators Group can be e-mailed at mmr_2000@yahoo.com.

THIS is the architect's perspective of Lions Park Residences located in Sun Valley, Paranaque City. The first tower will be turned over to residents in June 2007.

THE MASTER'S bedroom of the two-bedroom model unit offers spacious interiors.

Quadrillion launches new residential condo today

THE QUADRILLION GROUP OF COMPANIES, through its real estate marketing and development firm Quadrillion Sales, will launch proud today its newest residential condominium project.

Quadrillion president and CEO Melissa "Mel" Chua will lead the groundbreaking rites for the first tower of Lions Park Residences II,991 with other Quadrillion executives. The project is conveniently located in Sun Valley, Paranaque City, within 15 minutes of the Manila business district and within easy access to the international airport and schools.

Chua will also lead the unveiling of two model units. The one-bedroom unit, measuring 36 square meters, was specifically designed with young professionals in mind, considering that there is an instant, business activity from the pharmaceutical, logistics, and telecommunications companies. The two-bedroom unit offers ample space for a growing family, as it was ingeniously designed at 42 sq m.

Affordable

The affordable unit prices and convenient payment terms make this Quadrillion project stand out among similar developments. A unit can be reserved for only P15,000 with monthly amortizations of as low as P15,000. Owners can also combine adjacent units for bigger unit spaces for their families.

Chua promised that the first 1,991 residential units in 21 stories will be completed and can move in as early as June 2007. "After this groundbreaking ceremony, we will immediately proceed with a fast but quality construction so that our clients will enjoy the comforts of their new homes sooner," Chua said.

OFW investors

Most of their clients are foreign-based Filipinos, popularly called overseas Filipino workers or OFWs. Proud of the project's pricing, Quadrillion Sales Manager Gerardo Lopez Jr. revealed during their Inward-Lopez-Pereira condom marketing. The roadshow generated P150 million in revenues for Lions Park. Thus, Quadrillion is now preparing for the second leg of the roadshow to cater more and more OFWs to ensure is an LPR unit.

In particular, the OFWs interested in Lions Park became they were eyeing the best of amenities within this eco-friendly community. Landscaped parks are generously laid out in between buildings and the open spaces. A swimming pool, a playground with a fish pond and butterfly garden, jogging trails and barbeque pits make it a perfect residence for growing families. Each building will also have its own elevator to make it convenient for residents.

Heads of families, young professionals, and investors can join the Lions Park Residences groundbreaking and open house by simply calling (632) 833-8333 or (632) 750-1300. Or check out www.quadrillionsgroup.com.ph.

Spreading your tunes anywhere around the property

By Charlie E. Butao

SO, YOU HAVE THE GARDEN, the pool and the company, but what about the music? Important to just about every gathering, music is second only or lighting in terms of creating ambiance.

Besides, having spent years collecting a fabulous collection of CDs and MP3 downloads, why not share them with your guests? It used to be that music can only be enjoyed in the living room. These days it's also possible to bring it to the kitchen, backyard, or just about anywhere around the property," explains Wilson Ho, president and CEO of Electro Watchdog Corp., exclusive distributor of Bose entertainment systems in the country.

The company recently showcased in its newest branch located at the SM Mall of Asia a host of audio and multimedia systems meant for those building new homes, renovating or planning to put up audio systems outdoor.

Incorporate

"Among the challenges when building a new home or renovating an existing one is how to incorporate the audio system seamlessly into the architecture of one's home. Even if homeowners would love to bring the music to other rooms and even outside, they wouldn't like their speakers and wirings ruining their home's décor," he says.

The solution: Bose Bose. For example, how a team of experts who could coordinate with homeowners and builders to come up with solutions that could hide or make the system blend into the room.

"Today's technology would still let your home instead of equipment that compromises your décor," he continues.

He adds that Bose's technology would allow home dwellers to have the music on in all the rooms, and as they walk around, hear the music continuously.

Type of speakers

Another issue is the choice of the right type of speaker. "Not all speakers are built the same. While in room speakers would perform excellently inside outdoor spaces, it will not work well outdoors as there would be nothing it not less sometimes for the sound to bounce off," he explains.

According to him, this is why Bose came out with environmental speakers that could bring music to any outdoor location...in the garden, porch or even by the pool.

"You might wonder how such a speaker placed near your less delivers such clear, rain and sound in your ears. The Free Space 51 speakers, for example, offer exceptionally broad, even coverage, thanks to a radial design that enables 360-degree sound dispersion. Its rugged, weather-resistant casing and downward-firing 4 1/2" full-range driver can stand exposure to outdoor elements. Its unique sound sound, so they can be installed in the garden or near bodies of water," he says, revealing the open areas around the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City are equipped with Bose environmental speakers.

Another example are Bose's 251 and 151 SE environmental speakers, which can be connected to a Bose Lifestyle music system or another source and placed in outdoor areas like walls and ports.

Visit like this Free Space 51, these speakers are also engineered and tested to withstand rain, salt and sun exposure extremes of 140 degrees Celsius to -30 degrees Celsius (250 and -40 and 70 degrees Celsius to -40 degrees Celsius (151 model). These speakers deliver a level of performance that surpassed outdoor speakers...and most indoor speakers—simply never match. As proof, they are protected by a five-year limited warranty," he assures.

Remote convenience

He also explains that these systems allow home dwellers to take advantage of a remote control.

"What if these people spend a lot of time outside—having barbecues, playing with children outside, relaxing by the pool—they can easily change the music without going inside," he boasts.

Indeed, he explains that planning on one's audio and multimedia system when building or renovating houses is a worthwhile investment. "It's part of the house so it enters its market value and perhaps, your image in the neighborhood."

THE TOUGH and versatile Bose Free Space 51 environmental speakers are designed to stay outside all year long.

THE BOSE i/O SE 5 surround-styling blends easily into the design of your home for unobtrusive listening.

Workshop on energy efficiency promotion successful

A SIXTY-OTHER ART OFFICE BUILDING, a renowned hospital, a local mall, an office building and an interactive air-conditioning system have one thing in common. They are designed to save a lot of energy. They have been acknowledged by the Asean Energy Awards because of their exceptional strategies in reducing energy. These projects were presented in a recent seminar-workshop held at the Intercontinental Manila Hotel.

The seminar-workshop on the promotion of energy efficiency and conservation for buildings in Southeast Asia was organized by the Philippine Department of Energy (DOE), the Japan Energy Center (JEC) and the Energy Conservation Center Japan (ECCJ).

The goal of the annual seminar-workshop is to share the energy-efficient principles and practices of the winning entries with the public and private sectors so that they may adopt the technologies and measures that have made the entries leading models in the conservation of the Earth's depleting energy resources.

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Armando de Jesus

Opening statements

On another footnote, manager for administration and finance of the Asian Centre for Energy (ACE), cited the role of ACE as a catalyst for the economic growth and development of the Asean region by initiating, coordinating and facilitating regional activities and joint and collective activities on energy to the operating remarks. Zamora also noted the gradual shift from fossil fuels to renewable and other forms of energy.

Rodrigo Uduo, general manager of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), explained the close collaboration of Japan with Asean and the various activities they conduct to promote energy efficiency in the region such as energy audits, workshops and training programs.

Uduo also talked about the promotion of sustainable buildings in Japan and the trends in their energy consumption. He explained that "new initiatives have started over building from design to demolition. These agencies are concerned not only with energy efficiency but also with the quality of life as a result of energy management."

Energy Undersecretary Mariano Iniguez welcomed the local and foreign guests including the technical experts from the Asean countries.

Mahar Domingo, DOE senior science research specialist, gave an overview of the department's initiatives to promote energy efficiency in the country through their "EC Play to Life" program. EC, which means energy conservation, is a program designed to reach out to people from all walks of life. Paid economy ads, of different ear models, newspaper ads, website reduction programs, electronic bank recognition programs, labeling systems and the Philippine Green Alt Art are some of the activities of DOE.

Best practices presentations

• Bhilai's Steel Exchange Building, BSEB1, Philippines—2nd runner-up, Berkshire Building category

Schneider Louis Brown, property manager, presented the retrofitted features of BSEB such as double-glazed windows, energy-efficient lighting management systems, air-conditioning systems and preventive maintenance systems.

• Greenbelt 3 Mall, Philippines

Jerrell Abreu, property manager, discussed the mall's passive design features such as daylighting, interior landscaping with water features, and air-filtered active features such as condensing water system, lighting system, cooling tower and solid waste management.

• Plaza III, Jakarta, Indonesia (2005 winner—Retrofitted Building category)

John Budi Hutomo Lumpkin, from the Al-Bik Jaya University, highlighted building features where the building is oriented facing north-south, the use of solar reflective glass walls, a flexible air-conditioning system that responds to the changing needs of the users and based on owners and tenant participation.

Budi discussed an innovative air-conditioning system that cuts down humidity while increasing efficiency through a water jet nozzle.

He also presented UOBA Wandeya Syndicate, this year's second runner-up in the new and existing building category. Some of the features are energy-efficient air-conditioning, high-performance glass and energy-conscious tenant fitting guidelines.

• Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore (winner, Retrofitted Building category)

Vincent Ting Beng Ding, senior engineer, presented Singapore's second biggest and tallest hospital. He mentioned skillet operation, photocell sensors, HVE emitters for cool cleaning to save water, a rain sensor to cut off pumps when rains come, carbon dioxide sensors, fuel cells and carbon monoxide sensors.

• Ministry of Energy, Water and Communications Building (Low Energy Office) Malaysia (winner—New and Existing Building category)

Abd. Rahim Mahmood presented the features of Malaysia's first government building targeting 50 percent energy saving compared to other buildings without energy-efficiency design. Important features are required evaporative cooling and controls for building, natural ventilation, maximized use of daylight, sensor of light dimmer, shading devices, green roof, thermal flow check and curtain wall glazing.

The way forward

Akira Kobayashi from the Energy Conservation Center of Japan shared the advanced measures and technology for energy efficiency and conservation in Japan. He said their policy regarding energy conservation is based on economic growth, environmental protection and energy security. Other measures discussed were Japan's commitment to the Kyoto Protocol (6 percent of greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 level), incentives for businesses, licensing for energy managers and subsidies.

Maureen Balmaceda from the Asean Center of Energy explained the development of a technical directory for major industries and buildings in Asean member countries so as to market and promote technologies and best practices on EE&C available in the world and in Asean. The directory is now designed to encourage further investments, help create the market and promote synergies of increased efficiency.

Closing ceremonies

Director Mario Marasigan of DOE Energy Utilization Management Bureau assisted by Undersec Uduo, then issued certificates of appreciation to the technical experts and presenters.

Marasigan also delivered the closing remarks and thanked the participants, especially the technical experts. He concluded the affair with a note of optimism about the positive potential and awareness of energy efficiency in the region.

The challenge

This is the second time Manila hosted the workshop. With the knowledge gained from the workshop, the participants look forward to applying sustainable building practices in their projects.

By increasing quality of life derived from the safety, comfort, flexibility and beauty of buildings, and decreasing the environmental impact, especially related to building and construction, a higher environmental efficiency will be achieved.

Asean Best Building Practices guidelines are available at the DOE Call Medea Domingo at 840-2233.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadejesus@gmail.com.

A taste of global living at One Serendra

AYALA LAND PREMIER RECENTLY PROMOTED its valued clients and prospective homeowners of One Serendra a treat in-depth experience of its unparalleled home-to-amenities living premise through a festival of international cuisine, fashion and design from its rising retail powerhouse appropriately named Shops at Serendra.

The two-day event, held over the weekend, dubbed "A Taste of Global Living," brought together an array of food, service and retail merchants of Shops at Serendra at the sprawling pocket of the Fernando Soler Pavilion on Aliwi Street in Bonifacio Global City right across the arrival One Serendra condominium. The success of Serendra's one suburban lifestyle is already taking shape and where Shops at Serendra was opened to the public since its soft launch in September. Guests reveled in the exciting multicultural atmosphere of Shops at Serendra, which is already a favorite of the discerning and globally influenced lifestyle at One Serendra.

Sumptuous spread

Lead out for the lobby was a sumptuous spread of modern Filipino cuisine from Gingai, tapas and modern Spanish dishes from Gusto, unique Mediterranean-Moroccan cuisine from Sir, a hearty pasta dish from Portico, and delectable desserts from Cupcakery Sonja and Kendra. Complete the evening dining experience were Coffee Bean that will supply its finest One Serendra home-va vinnaccinitting pot of flavors a small array.

A mini bazaar also showcased one-of-a-kind finds such as Oriental charms and accessories from World of Feng Shui, vintage clothing from Inglot Girl, Gloria Araneta-styled fashions from Klamra, home furnishings from Ion Casa, and exquisite jewelry and fashion accessories from Lizza. One Serendra homeowners will never have a difficult time filling their abodes with treasured keepsakes art pieces and more from said merchants.

Pampering services

Early open house sojourners were also introduced to complimentary 1-hour and hand care sessions from Nail Tropics & Body Shop and premium beauty spa and dermatological packages from Synergy Dermpro. There are just some of the many pampering services one can look forward to living in One Serendra. There will be no more tedious trips to malls or shopping centers for physical replacement.

Also provided to One Serendra clients were subtle retail treats in the form of a passport booklet with various discounts from the shops that participated in the events...as ex. chance rather to the good life at One Serendra.

First glance

The event also gave the public and prospective buyers a first glance at One Serendra's newly designed one-bedroom unit by renowned interior designer Gerry Contreras. His interior concept focused on a neoclassical European design, fitting the spacious one-bedroom unit with warm colors and finishes that are modern pieces of furniture, finely befitting One International properties of One Serendra dwellers and would be next owners. Rustic accents such as rich drapes, wood pieces and ornate furniture with plush upholstery, all in shades of gold, copper and black speak a befitting of the understated luxury, exclusivity and elegance that One Serendra provides.

Also unveiled was a new and more spacious marketing area, providing more room for clients who are interested in One Serendra to understand the development even more and appreciate the tremendous luxury of space and enjoyment the Ayala Land Premier development offers. One Serendra's sales pavilion area has designer furniture and carefully chosen interior design elements reflective of the discerning tastes of its residents.

For more information on One Serendra, call 840-1888 (1878), e-mail customercare@oneserendra.com or visit www.oneserendra.com.

One Serendra's expanded and redesigned marketing area at the Serendra sales pavilion in Bonifacio Global City is a true reflection of the refined and elegant experience of the Ayala Land Premier lifestyle.

THE ONE-BEDROOM model unit was designed by acclaimed architect Gerry Contreras, in a classic but modern European inspired theme.

Eurocrek
UPVC DOOR & WINDOW SYSTEM

100% WATERPROOF
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Available in 27 colors
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ACRYL MEL
ACRE CAST
MACNELL AQUABASE
ACRE LAX
Eliminates Concrete Seepage
100% Waterproof
MAYON INDUSTRIAL CORP.

BUSINESS

Still strong, peso seen to temper inflation

Go easy on water use, Napocor warned

By Christine A. Saplacan

THE NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES Board (NWRB) has cautioned National Power Corp. against getting too much water from Angat Dam for power generation.

NWRB said allocating too much water for power generation might lead to severe shortages in Metro Manila and nearby provinces considering Angat Dam's critical water levels.

Napocor operates hydroelectric power from Angat Dam, which is also the main source of potable water for Metro Manila households and irrigation for farmlands in Central Luzon.

"Napocor can still regulate water from Angat Dam but the agency has to strictly follow the allocation level of water released," NWRB executive director Ramon Alikpala told the Inquirer.

He noted that the agency's announcement of a "water shortage" in Manila restricted Napocor from using more than what it needs.

NWRB data showed that from May 1 until Oct. 15, Napocor took more water from Angat Dam to cool in the Malaya oil-fired Thermal Power Plant (MPPP).

However, Alikpala noted that Napocor was only mandated to use the same amount of water as the National Irrigation Administration.

To ease the water level going below the critical level of 180 meters, some rationing will have to be implemented.

The initial cutback in the water supply would directly affect some 30,000 households served by water concessionaires Manila Water and some 150,000 households served by Maynilad in the west zone.

Alikpala's says that with rapid water loss on no-water pressure include 476 kilometers in Northern Caloocan, Commonwealth, Roosevelt, Novaliches, Valenzuela, Quezon, South Caloocan, Malabon and Navotas, as well as Tondo, San Cruz, Sampaloc, South Manila, Pandacan, Paco, Dominique and Cavite-Las Piñas.

Manila Water, on the other hand, said the 5-percent cutback in the water supply would not affect its customers in the east zone due to some contingency measures it has prepared.

Currency strength hinges on BSP's key rates decision

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY HIT A NEW FOUR-year high of 49.76 before closing at 49.82 against the US dollar as upbeat investment data eases portfolio inflows.

And with the holidays just around the corner, remittances from overseas Filipino workers—which traditionally push the three of the year—are also starting to pour in.

Benjamin Austria of Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation) said that foreign portfolio investments and OFW inflows have been supporting the peso's strength.

The recovery, in turn, is seen to temper the rise in consumer prices.

Treasurer told reporters that the country's average inflation rate for the year would likely be lower than 6.5 percent.

The local currency opened at 50 against the dollar at 49.81 and peaked at 49.76 during the day to close at 49.82 against dollar.

The yesterday high of 49.76 was the highest level reached since May 20, 2002 when the peso hit 49.74.

The peso gained 6 centavos from Thursday's closing of 49.88/$1.

The volume of the Philippine Dealing System was heavy at $722 million compared to the average turnover of $500 million.

To limit the outlook for sovereign peso is still there, but I guess that, moving forward, the magnitude of appreciation will depend on the future decision of the BSP on its [overnight] interest rates," said ACI Philippines president and BDO Private Bank treasurer Jose Limcaoco Ejercito.

"If the overnight rates will be reduced, then the appreciation will not be much, but the peso/use trend will still be there," Ejercito said.

With the decrease in interest rates, investors are less likely to hold on to peso-denominated assets.

Also, the offshore market remained bullish on the Philippines' foreign currency-denominated corporate bonds, or RDBs.

As a consequence, where the international Bilateral Power Corp. began issuing 10-year bonds, the price of the notes went up.

"We expect the strength of the government guarantees and positive sentiment toward the sovereign to drive the Hypospread to 25 basis points over the course of 2007," ING Bank said.

The positive sentiment on the RDBs was further supported by comments from Finance Secretary Margarito Teves that the government may sell only $1 billion in new bonds next year, given the willingness of multilateral lenders to increase their support to the country.

For the first time since nearly a decade of grappling with huge budget deficits, inflows from official development assistance may exceed commercial borrowings and result in a decrease in the issuance of BOP-related risk.

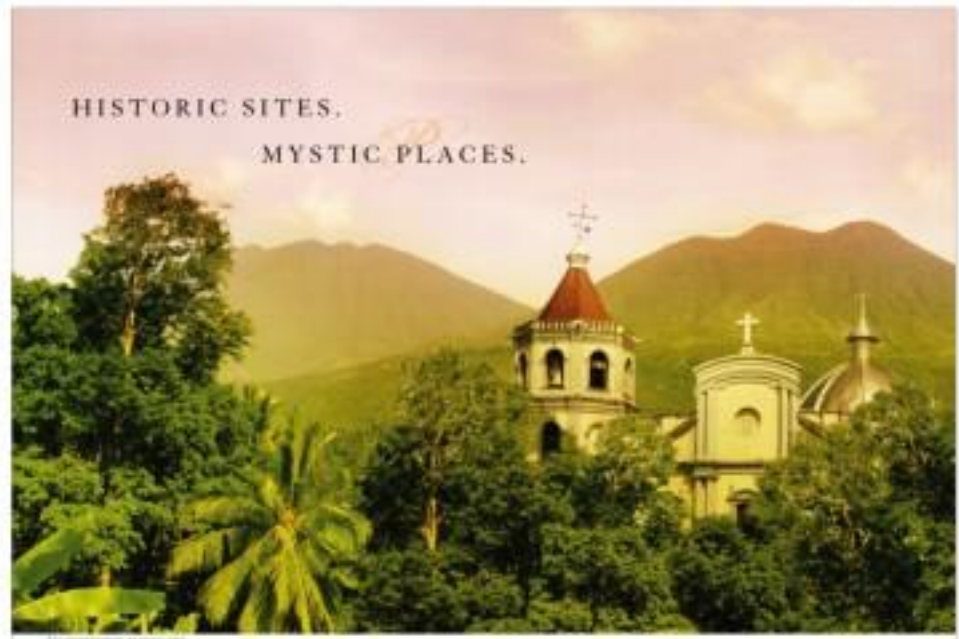
In the past, multilateral and bilateral lenders were reluctant to increase their credit line to the Republic, which was forced to tap more expensive commercial loan swings, such as bond floats, to fill the government's external funding requirements.

But the Philippines is now in a position to reverse that trend, the finance chief said.

The last time the government turned to ODA for its external funding rather than commercial bond floats was during the Ramos administration which ended in 1998.

Meanwhile, British banking giant Standard Chartered Bank is bullish on the country's solid economic fundamentals, citing ratings-worth regularly fueled by robust export receipts and strong inflows from overseas Filipino workers.

The bank's Hong Kong-based economist Frances Cheung projected that the country's strong external position should push the peso higher to 46.50 by the first quarter of 2007.



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LANDCO PACIFIC

HACIENDA ESCUDERO

Be kind to party animals! page 02

TREND ALERT! Watch out for **Singleringen**—you'll soon be wearing one page 02

Designer **Nicholas Ghesquier** and football star **Hidetoshi Nakata** in Manila page 02

Super's very own costume ideas by Gino de la Paz page 01

Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuaresma-Danio

Lights, Camera, Cinemanila!

CINEMANILA IS PROBABLY THE CLOSEST thing we will ever have to Cannes—minus the Hollywood movie stars and paparazzi stalked and camped, of course. Have for the year then played host to 10 Art celebrities Lee Chi-tented Phillips and Tio Cannes.)

This year, over 14 international films will vie for the coveted Lino Brocka Award (the local equivalent of the Palme d'Or), while fledgling Pinoy filmmakers get a chance to step in—or to a spanking new category, Digital Lokal.

On Friday, Nov. 3, don't miss the exclusive premiere of Peter Chan's "Perhaps Love" and the Gael Garcia Bernal movie "The Science of Sleep," director Michel Gondry's offbeat romantic take on the nature of dreams. They will be screened at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m., respectively at the SM Mall of Asia cinemas.

The 2006 Cinemanila International Film Festival will run from Nov. 3 to 11 at the cinemas of Greenhills, SM Megamall, SM North Edsa, Mall of Asia and the UCCP Auditorium in Intramuros, Manila. Call 527-3195/loc. 406 or visit www.cinemanila.com.ph.

Tonight, check out Green Halloween Ball 2006 Scat. Pistilloidea & Jukebox Lux at the Pinoy Trade Center, Intramuros. Halloween Ball at M Cafe. 1-UM Night: "Wicked: Mixed and Mangled" at Metrowalk Plaza, Ortigas at Eastwood Central Plaza; Hunger Idealism Night at Sagada; Backroom Party at Glorietta ground and Composition Night at Blue Jazz Cafe.

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more events, text 2675 to 2949 (Globe) and 269 (Smart). Log on to mag24-7.com or pick up 24/7 Nightlife Navigator at bars and venues around the city. Submit your schedules before Tuesday to comet@mag24-7.com and mag24_7@yahoo.com.

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Lord of the Singelringen

Super! traces the crazy journey of the single ring from one man's living room to Sweden and finally, your finger

By Pam Pastor

LIKE MANY BRILLIANT IDEAS, it occurred while Ricky Rakan was sitting in front of the television. "I was watching a news feature on Taiwan cable TV," he said.

The feature was on Taiwan's late birth rate—and how people have resorted to wearing single rings to find mates, get married and start a family. "I thought that was a great idea. The rings looked cool and I actually wanted one for myself. But I thought, hey wait, this is one of those things that we would never get here," Ricky said.

Then the light bulb flashed. "I asked myself, why not go out on a limb, take a chance and bring it here?"

And just like that, Ricky, the content development manager for Clubbi.com and the voice behind Shamcey Wu's Master Gordon character on local TV, began his first serious business venture.

"At first I thought of manufacturing it myself," Ricky said. But his discussions with possible friends proved to be futile. He decided to turn to the Internet and that's where he found Singelringen—the exact same ring he saw on TV.

Made in Sweden, Singelringen is a unisex sterling silver ring with a turquoise-colored acrylic center. The ring was created by Johan "Wildfish" at The single person's answer to wedding rings and engagement rings...their way to announce their independent status.

Singelringen was first sold in Sweden in 2005 and is now gaining popularity in Scandinavia, Europe, South America, the US and Asia. The ring, which was included in The Today Show's Hot Must-Haves for Fall, has been spotted on the fingers of Rosie Zellweger, Natalie Portman, Juliette Lewis, Naomi Campbell, Milmer Valdivesmo and Vivica Fox.

The ring, which was included in The Today Show's Hot Must-Haves for Fall, has been spotted on the fingers of Rosie Zellweger, Natalie Portman, Juliette Lewis, Naomi Campbell, Milmer Valdivesmo and Vivica Fox.

Ricky's market intuition, expressing his interest to bring Singelringen to the Philippines and a possible reply came just a few days later. Johan will be visiting the country next month to explore his newest Singelringen market. Today, Singelringen is available in Iloilo in Glorietta 1 and Caldemarks in Bonifacio 3 stores to four stores.

And although Ricky can't wear it (he's married), you can—on your right hand, with the crescent design facing outwards as a sign of your openness or on a whole around your neck. The ring is distinct and easy to spot. "The ring looks cool, it's chic, it's fashionable," said Ricky. "But it's not just a ring. It's a message. It declares that you're open to possibilities. It doesn't mean that you're looking for a boyfriend or a girlfriend or that you're desperate. It's saying that you're okay with being single, you love being independent but that you're also ready for romance."

Each ring also has a unique seven-digit code that you can use to log into the Singelringen website www.singelringen.com and connect to the global Singelringen community which already has over 50,000 members. Now that's a lot of potential mates!

And if you decide to take the plunge into a serious relationship, you can pass on your Singelringen to a possibly single friend.

The single revolution is just starting in the country—and Ricky wants to make sure it continues. "Hopefully by summer, we'll launch the bracelet, the mobile key ring, the key chain and the cologne."

Maybe in the future we'll see single mobile phones already packed with phone numbers of other singles in your area or single cars equipped with single people radar.

But for now, single people must turn to Singelringen and let their fingers do a lot of talking.

For inquiries, text 0918-5284922 or e-mail singelringen@gmail.com.

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Treats and Tricks

and intimidated, with an attractive new aluminum design and a multi-touch pad which makes it wearable. A fantastic Apple's jaw-opening shuffle feature that has made fans get a conniption fits of their favorite songs ourselves don't go.

So how you like them apples? Go ahead and indulge.

Watch closely: The Prestige

Meanwhile! We need you say a prestige—"The Prestige" movie! Christian Bale and Hugh Jackman play two very magician urban dwellers with their soul and revenge lead to extraordinary consequences. So daring, turn of the century Victorian London, there are more tricks and sleight of hand scenes in the film to keep your interest until the end. This is the perfect Halloween treat—and scenes of disappearances, doppelgangers, murders, and real genius scientists.

The script, based on a book of the same title, was expertly written by director Christopher Nolan ("Memento" and "Batman Begins") and his brother Jonah. It was endless like a magic trick itself, and just when you thought you've figured it out, you'll find yourself in for a surprise. Oh, and did we mention the great David Bowie plays the scientific genius Nikola Tesla?

This is the kind of film that would keep you discussing among friends over and over, long after the credits roll.

Bamboo Lounge Boracay

For those of you who're hit the holiday season and by heading to Boracay for the Halloween break, we highly recommend you discover this fabulous tucked away to spot of the tourist part.

Bamboo Lounge serves up island goodness the best Chinese cuisine we've tasted. What makes this place even more special (and so extra is intimate, possible access) is its serene, beautifully designed interior—most Bubble-rate we see many empties (when a accidentally a stowaway on the white shore). It's the perfect chilling space after you're heading on the Cliff Circle Trailers. The mango Banana halo rum to begin with and one to ring on our way, with its chill out-lunch interesting fruit flavorings.

Those over water bulb is aware of the great way to see the water. Bring's Chinese Island Spare Ribs (fried tasty, and to be recommended.

Bamboo Lounge is located in Diniki's Beach, Balabag Road, Boracay Island (Barangay White Beach and Boating Area). E-mail/reference (bamboolounge@yahoo.com

"Editorial photography is near and dear work. I use a wide range of lighting and equipment on any job work in all sorts of environments, local and occasionally. Whatever the job about me, I've got the **Nikon D200**. It offers incredible creative possibilities that make my work, and my client's profits, thanks a lot the lowest."

Kai Hoang
Editorial Photographer

"Wedding photography demands a lot of confidence and expertise. After all, it's your job to give a couple some great memories to cherish for a lifetime. That's why I rely on my camera's speed and great white balance because there's only ONE chance to get those perfect shots and with my **Nikon D80**, I'm confident that I'll capture those fleeting shots in a lifetime moments. And keep clients smiling coming."

Lito Ty
Wedding Photographer

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SUPER! SELECTIONS

Treats and Tricks

By Tek Diaz

Effective control of blood sugar, hunger and weight for diabetics

A breakthrough in diabetic nutrition, Glucerna SR is the number one nutritional formula clinically proven to help normalize blood sugar levels.

Spaced Release Carbohydrate Blend unlike other carbohydrate sources which produce a quick spike in blood sugar after meals, Glucerna SR supports the slowest or periodic release of glucose throughout the length of the gastrointestinal tract.

Effective Hunger Control Registering only 14 on the glycemic index scale, Glucerna SR effectively moderates the highs and lows of after-meal blood glucose responses.

Complete with 28 Vitamins and Minerals A whole range of essential nutrients as well as additional levels of vitamins E and B6, Folic Acid and Chromium help maintain good diabetic health.

High Monounsaturated Fatty Acids Glucerna SR helps lower blood cholesterol and promotes a healthy cardiovascular system.

Enriched with Fiber for healthy digestion that can help promote weight reduction.

GLUCERNA SR is a complete and balanced low-calorie nutritional formula for people with diabetes. Along with proper diet, exercise and medication, this delicious drink in butterscotch-vanilla and creamy chocolate flavors should be an essential part of the diabetic's healthy daily meal plan.

Ask your doctor about diabetes management.
For free nutrition counseling, call the DIABETES HOTLINE 559-0444 or the National Toll Free Hotline 1-800-108-433427 or email: hcs.ph@abbott.com (from Mondays thru Fridays, 8am - 5pm).

"With my diabetes under control, I've got my life back!"

"Being a diabetic hasn't stopped me from taking up my passions like badminton, tae-bo and singing in the church choir. To help keep my blood sugar normal, I take doctor-recommended Glucerna SR. This way, I can give 100% of myself at work and at home."

Mrs. Joenalyn Semira
Financial Advisor, Wife, Glucerna SR User

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4. This coupon shall not be used with any other discount privileges or promotions.
5. This coupon is valid for one (1) unit per transaction.
6. Valid only if DOH approval is printed on the coupon.

Good Nutrition for Diabetics is now just a Phone Call Away

Take this Healthy Lifestyle Nutrition Test to assess your nutritional risks:

1. Does your family have a history of diabetes?
2. Do you experience frequent hunger pangs or get overweight?
3. Do you have a sedentary lifestyle and have no time for exercise or other physical activities?
4. Have you experienced drastic weight loss without trying to in the past month?
5. Are you a mother who has given birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds?
6. Are you 45 years old and up?
7. Are you overweight or obese?
8. Do you have high blood pressure?
9. Do you have numbness or tingling in your feet?
10. Have you been told that you have a form of diabetes or high blood sugar?
11. Do you always feel thirsty or appetite starved?

If you answered yes to any one (1) or two (2) of the above questions, you could be at risk for diabetes or lifestyle illness. For more details, interested individuals may call Nutrasan at (02) 687-0444 or (02) 687-0555 and request to speak to a consultant or a health care provider.

Whatever your nutritional needs are, one contact the dietitians from Care Solutions Institute at (02) 687-0444 or call my cell phone number (+63) 0918 (CARE), Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for free nutritional consultation. Also, Nutrasan's nutrition experts can offer nutritional tips, a regular newsletter and special discounts. Remember, nutrition awareness is definitely a part of lifestyle change!

Super

pop culture . entertainment . recreation

Trick or freak!

Or what to wear to your next Halloween costume drama

THIS YEAR'S PILLSBURY DUKE—Come to the long-if-you've Halloween party and show off that very pierce feature.

Ape against the machine

Gino de la Paz

THANK ARE THREE THINGS I HATE hosted more in common with people: Religion, politics, and the Great Pumpkin."—Linus Van Pelt, "It's the Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown"

Throughout my entire theme-party-attending life, I've always found it challenging to dress up in costume. Year after year, the pressure reaches a fine Limp-wristy splendor come Halloween, since ghastly would but more apparently the everything bit of all holidays. When else are you encouraged—nay, expected to rock leggy superhero tights and shiny name underwear? The Morning Night, of course—when even a Santy Claus outfit, at-frame Bunny suit, or your garden-variety yoga are welcome to the fresh down. Compared to other red-letter days, the eve of Oct. 31st is so obliterated with all things sanity and holidays I'm convinced it gave birth to "Project Runway."

The same time we're long ago, my lifetime roommate and I decided to outing by a Halloween party at our university pub. We decided—I forget, now...to come as "The Cross" (opera, unlike the whole world and his uncle, he is a flash of bare-induced inspiration, we chose to dress up as...sadal...the fallen World Trade Center towers, complete with crumpled paper airplanes and outstretched people jumping out of our sides.

We decided against it, however, after a female jail friend (her the whole gag was a bit Crossing unnecessarily) came, even by our standards. In like Fight Club, we swore not to talk about it and (cause) in the part) in our non-creative outfits. Me as her monster roadkill and later on, well, a Mexican. He didn't win any prizes, not even a sweet tequila lotion. Hm.

Halloween high jinks

But now, the Halloween high jinks continued last year, though now they were clearly not of my doing. In Los Angeles, amidst people dress up as giant tampons, I spotted a few dudes decked out in—hold your breath—bikini ads. Our performance art, part guerilla marketing, the guy painted themselves black and walked around with partners-colored backdrops. To complete the postmodernist, they passed and posed awkwardly with their all-other gadgets. I tell you, it was awesome. Too bad didn't think about it first.

See, in these post-reality TV times, it's not enough to go-stick or remaining at another's grocery ghost, or concerning vampires. One's Halloween costume must now balance statement and substance, bringing on associations in certain people while exciting a sense of astonishment in others. And kids, there's more.

Costume party to costume drama

To top the All Hallow's Eve ante, think of everything not as a mere costume party but as a costume drama. Though the cast is mentally and within the course of having Marchant Ivory films, I now give you permission to do whatever you please with it as I have.

To start, why not disguise yourself as a director do you? Though fairly reliable costume options, Baldwin Hamm, Osama Bin Laden, and George W. Bush are terrible guess and are no longer viable indications of one's satirical wisdom. Take the one from MadTV (Bobby Lee rules!) and come instead as Jim Jong-il. Not only will you hit inveterate Indian and Hawaii without changing name, you'll also wind up with a bizarrely sexy power haircut. But if humiliating yourself all the next century at out is to do so your bit, guess-as: the North Korean pantsless with a few gold chains and some grill. The result? Kim Jong-Chill, yo.

Another painfully obvious though historical choice would be to opted Hollywoodies. The first person that comes to mind is the alien baby Ken Cloise. Just cut out her mug from one of those oversized Asian lobstertile Shitty Hat shots, throw it up, and see as a mask. To drive the point home at your upcoming Halloween bash, jump on the snack like Emilly Yon (a.k.a. The Shat humoring Shat to Hollywood) and make and puppy-dog faces like Mommy Ken (a.k.a. Jen Sober). At the same time, it may be cruel to make fun of infants, but hey whatever.

Fear factory

But really, once you get willing with the creative Halloween juice, you shouldn't stop. After all, the feast's fun, stupid. Items could ain't limited to parodies of people. Animals

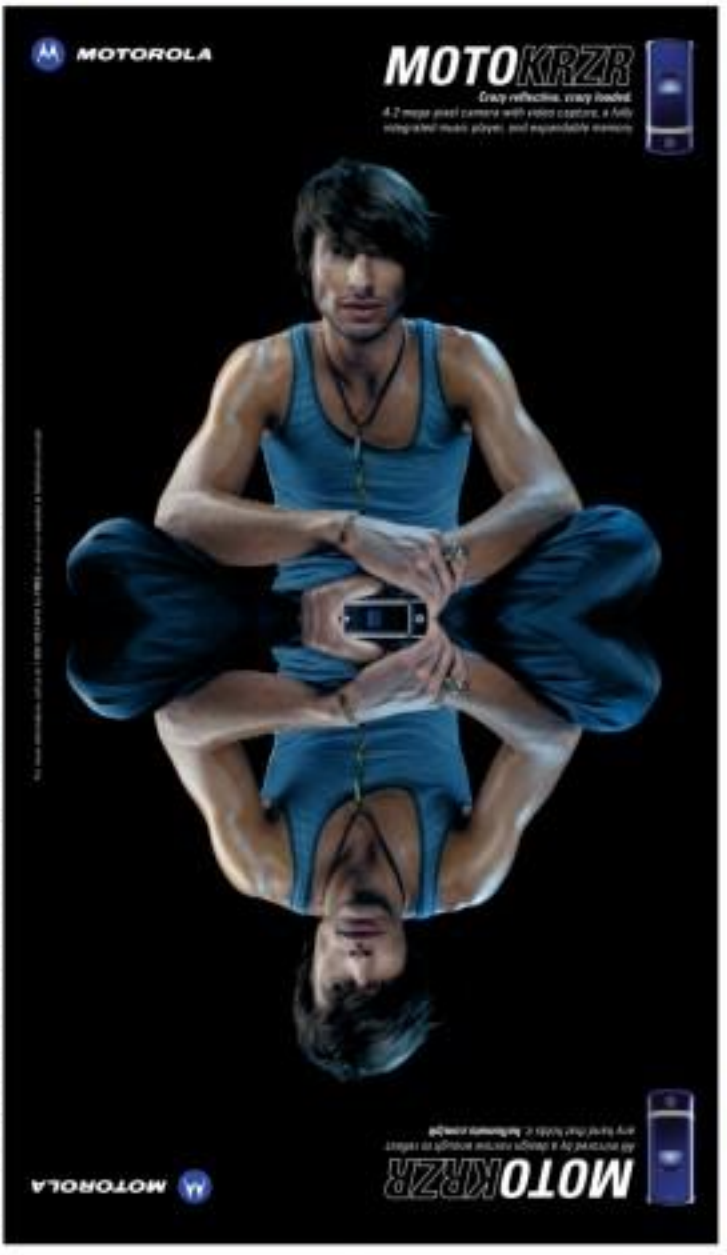
and inanimate objects are also fair game and deserve to be leveled with our evil snowfrost.

Since the environment especially the state of our socio-climate a compelling social and political concern, team up as Simm. And to give things a current affairs twist, I suggest assuming your Manic-clad self with black bunker hat. Hey, if Shakira can do it...see "La Tortura"...so can you. I Think of it as your best chance to share in the Gwenamm oil spill.

Witch-dapped

And last...to get everyone to order up and dance or other pressing matters, I recommend putting on a cameo to a billboard. Coming in any outdoor signage would do, but the poorer the art direction, the better. For some dramedy collapse sporadically at the slightest provocation and pile down party peeps who may or may not be in your way. Complete the ruffruta and add rest of your closest bush-w-come as a superglucose (see your imagination) and an old bra. Your opinionated Halloween production will bring new meaning to the words "collateral" and "damage."

If you choose to follow my words of wisdom, two things may happen by the time the night is over. On the one hand, you may end up getting witch-zapped. This is especially the case if you sought your episode in Anita Ahhang, where kids were centered to say "God bless you!" instead of "Trick or treat!" sometime ago. On the other, you just may become a certified Halloween legend. Who knows? Because of your lead, costume drama may crash up on less predictable outfits a year from now. Till then, when kids can smear dressed as one-eyed kittens (or if they're parental, like, Thomas the Train and Friends, I wish you good luck with the youthful minded. Bon, y'all!



Be kind to party animals

THIS HALLOWEEN season, I encourage you to unleash the animal within. Growl your way to a costumed revelry and paze your way on the frivolity parade.

No Good Gimp, you are the only surgeon in town's most feared it's all too easy to dress the pie as the clown, so dressy, we should have a team of killer lawyers that Armed Jawers so, make an attempt to be cool, we may become acquainted.

Okay, now on the topic of the season like none of us, everyday is Halloween, gear up and get ready for our play. It's the season of the year where we are not going to be accused as a "Jesus Freak/Satan worshipper for showing up over the top. But to those I loved, I know of some people who have already called my shots you to come in — MCs via spoilers/other sources.

Well, there are lots of thrilling parties tonight and tomorrow night. Big Fish, their last exhibitionism to-product, for an overview to the Industry "heroes, flaunted and flounce Princess have gone supreme way with Pixie Dwalt and Sicky Brandon. Then you to keep the Big Fish name while Ruby on up north towers, which takes care of the running of foreign electronic brands, like Dillwood in the House, which Big Fish is collaborating with party group Superfly this fest. Another party to watch out for is Hitoshi Japanese Ambassador Clemente this Sun. It's by the new party group Step Up production. They're the ones bringing the best acts for 2005's to watch out for.

Tonight, Nicholas Ghesquire and Japanese football star Hidetoshi Nakata will be the special guests in the Embassy Superclub VVVIP Halloween ball.

The celebrity set

If the beauty pageant set gotten crowd around the World Trade Center, the celebrity set are all gunna be at Embassy Superclub. The House Studio are launching Gabriel Cosmetics while while at the club, the Hollywood Cosmetic Cartoon Ball of the season, "Saturday Fun Matches Unlimited" your childhood TV heroes/villains as well. Come as your favourite cartoon character—animal, animation, the kingpin, Transformers, Silent Cyril.

And who are you going to party with? Join YOU Nicholas Ghesquire and Japanese football star Hidetoshi Nakata as super special guests in the Superclub VVVIP to celebrate, in safety—unless you're Hidetoshi Nakata, Boss man.

The winner of the best in costume in our fantastic halloween ball gets an all-expense paid trip, birthday party for the winner and his or her friends. Again, brazilian.

On the party/party party, where we missed Flicker Nelson contributing editor and champagne chair anthropologist and sponsors this Jan. 31 Apparatus to a "Be kind to Party Animals party" unexplored benefit, as for dolls, Miss Tinks played her self on Jamie's shops and Celine Lopez played party bunny. So all go on vacation from Tokyo and Bristol on the shores of the party night shore and then, and then, it's always fun to bring out the animal side in you.

Be a night, go out your cage—the world is a zoo and animals like you and me are.

A new 'Plain' takes off

D URING THE AFTERMATH OF the "Milenyo" storm, each three billboards withstood the winds of Mother Nature. As soons as the winds stopped functioning, three giant advertisements stood loud and proud on the main strip of billboard boulevard otherwise known as Edsa.

Kate Hudson smiled brightly (of course, she's an ounce L.A.), Our Lady of Guadalupe towered over her favorite watering hole Café Lupe and the double vision of what seemed to be the spinning image of my best friend.

Yup, you got it right, that's Celine Lopez and her evil twin looming over our driving consciousness, endorsing Plains and Prints and she (okay, one the do) that used to be occupied by Sling queen Gretchen Ramirez, who also remains as Plains and Prints endorser. The Mark Nicolas-Brent Calimag-Hince act (its UpcycleFashion could not have come at a better time when the holiday season is fast approaching. According to our hopes' countdown, it is now exactly 55 days till Christmas, and you we should cut you apparel.

Celine had a hand in helping brand owners Rosanna Berlias brighten up Plains and Prints' holiday collection. As I watched Celine rose down the ramp in navy-gold, I could only stand back, applaud—and realize how proud I am for I have witnessed her style evolution from plains to prints and beyond. Tim Yap

ROSES GARDEN. Rhett Eakas and Kristelle de Rossi

SHOW BIZ SHOPPING. Vivian Rue Lord Michelle Madrigal

MOTHER AND SON. Host Calamay and Kenlin Howes

FASHION AND FUNCTION. Ashlee Hasenpoll and Bubbles Perales

ABSOLUTE LOOK. Marvel Crespo and Pablo Amigo

Robinsons Department Store

A Boo-tiful Treat

Robinsons Galleria Flagship Store

Robinsons Malls | Westernmart Malls | Ninja Malls | Tutuban Center | Metropolis Star Alabang | Festival Mall Alabang | Limketkai Mall Cagayan De Oro

Take snapshots of your Halloween haunts with this.

CHAMPION CLICKERS. Jet Nicholas, Bobbit's Bobbi Kwan, Maylou Arcache, Phoenix's Bernardo, Kodak's Angie Francisco, Raymond Albert and Tito Yap

TINSELTOWN SHOT. Valerie de los Santos, Paolo Paraiso and Mylene Dizon with baby Tomas posing this early

SUPER MANGAS, ETC. Sam Oh, PJ Ledesma, David Miller with Kodak's Ronnie Perugia

Click click bang bang!

Text and photos by David Miller

AT THE LAUNCH OF Kodak's latest and smartest set of cameras, they gathered a bunch of celebrities, models, and media personalities in a role-reversing contest. Instead of being the ones under the flash bulbs, their tasks made to pass and display their new Kodak V705. Everyone got to play photographer for a day during the Kodak Always Celebrity Shoot. One contest held at 8Cafe in Greenhill. The snapping games involved assigning the fun lens shots or categories like panoramic shot, perfect result, bluetooth capability, ultra-wide, most artificial photo, 10x optical zoom and 15" mirror prints...all these as part of the full features of Kodak's latest 9-lenses camera.

WILLKOM GUY THING! JOHN Dingwall and Tito Yap

KATRO K. Kodak's toastmaster at a country GM Raymond Albert

JUDGING BLEES YOU. Judiths Pastrana-Gonzales Kodak

SHOOTING SCHEDULE. Angie Francisco and Phoenix's Bernardo, soon to star with Lito Lapuz for the Manila Film Festival

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The big three

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Camera junkies aside, the latest in V-series line of cameras, the V705 features a new sliding digital ad easements wrapped in a sleek camera body while refining true to Kodak's signature ease-of-use. The refined payback in the games and although we didn't take home the photo, we managed it, holding with the Kodak camera.

As the ambassadors to us, read on: The latest in Kodak's stable of famous lenses is the Kodak EasyShare V610 Dual Lens Digital Camera. It is the world's smallest 10x (38-380 mm equivalent) optical zoom camera at less than an inch thick. Using innovative Kodak Retina Dual Lens technology, this tiny, pocket-sized 7.1 megapixel camera has 10x lens for dramatic C Verzoom all-glass, wide-angle zoom lenses to deliver a long zoom range—a first for a small camera. Before, everybody wanted it big—now the smaller, the better. At least in cameras.

The shoot-out day ended as the photogenic and camera-ready team of Phoenix's Bernardo, Maricris Arcache, Tito Yap and Judiths Pastrana were the camera-ready crew leaving their top of the line cameras.

After shots, I think it's your turn to pose and pose for your closeup. Ready, get set, click.

SATURDAY Special

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Edna Nestor U. Torre ● Aurora Edna Lloyd Avila

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NOW SHOWING

Folk tales and urban legends live on

"THE GRUDGE 3." Interweaving storylines in fractured chronology.

By Rito P. Avila

"The Grudge 3"

Dir Takashi Shimizu
S: Yasuko Michiyoshi Ueda, Justice Tsuruhiyo, Jennifer Beals

THE WRATH OF EVIL ADAMS lingers—especially if it keeps churning out good business at the box office. Using interwoving storylines inconvenient timing together in fractured chronology, Takashi Shimizu's technically proficient sequel lacks originality and soul.

But, for viewers who haven't seen any of the film series' first (!) previous big-screen incarnations, this cautionary tale about domestic violence and retribution can still send shivers down the spine.

The vengeful curse starts on two years after American exchange student, Karen (Sarah Michelle Gellar), burns down the haunted house in Tokyo, where the gruesome story of Kayako (Takako Fuji), the long-haired woman; the wide-eyed blue boy, and their unspeakable black jar began.

This time, Karen's sister, Aubrey (Marley Shelton), flees to Japan and teams up with Eason (Johnny Chen), a handsome but motherless photojournalist, to solve the mystery that drove her estranged sister to a psychiatric facility.

In parallel stories, three naughty, now high school girls satisfy their fascination for the macabre by exploring the condemned mansion near their school in Tokyo, while Web Controller Rydell and his stepson (Matthew Knight) endure uncanny, hooded neighbors and a chilling, new flat in Chicago as they come to terms with a troubled past.

Soon, they all learn that curiosity doesn't just kill cats, it also vengeful (Judou people who can't keep their noses out of business that don't concern them!

This formulaic, shoddy produced yarn, trapped in brisk, 3 horror fashion, features fine performances from Beals, bright and feisty...who can't seem to shake off her Buffy-meets-ghosts rep (she will next be seen in another thriller, "The Rescue").

The film's first six beginnings with a promising mélange of seemingly unrelated narrative strands—a disoriented device that Shimizu out 20 minutes into the movie. It's hard to believe Shimizu couldn't come up with new ideas six years after "Juon" first exploded on the big screen. But, originality and concept take the back seat when the dough keeps coming—and coming.

"Barang"

D: Neal Tan
S: Adlenia Palomeo, Jay Manalo, Arlene Jose, Lisa Lorena

No doubt about it, our country is rich in history and folklore. In Mindanao, we grow up dazzled by stories about marabunta ant-like, their society so colorful as they are confounding.

Long before the White Lady has captured the imagination of today's kids, other ghostly ghosts beings and demonic practices haunted the countryside.

There's the aqua (a very dark, hairy being), the aswang (a lingering, flesh-eating), the duwende (a cigar-puffing giant), the sukdayl (a blood-sucking, winged creature like the nunuwanggil, but with legs), and the manmanbalut or the albularyo, a quack doctor or folk healer who uses local medicines and perform rituals—or hilots in Tagalog, and barang to the Visayan dialect.

In Neal Tan's latest production, Thalia (Sharon Marquez) goes home to Ilea. Barbara eight years after she is rescued from her sister, Igna (Adlenia Palomeo), who died allegedly from Mrs. Ursula's barang (curse). Ursula, a manghihilot (faith) wants to avenge the death of her sister, adopted son, Elmo (Jay Manalo), but his black magic finds competition in Aling Inamin's (Jaclyn Jose) white magic. The duo then engages in a duel, waged not with sword and light sabers, but with potions and herbs!

Jaclyn is impressive despite an underwritten role. Also notable are Palomeo, Manalo and Marquez. The film likewise earns plus points for its impressive setting, Kiev Church (Negros)

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A cool, cool Hallowe'en weekend in Camp John Hay

PREPARE FOR A COOL, COOL HALLOWE'EN weekend as Camp John Hay from Oct. 27 to 31. Halloween revelers both old and young will be treated to five days of fun and relaxation – featuring scary movies, kid-oriented activities, and a merry party!

Acoustic Afternoon at the Art Park – afternoon jam on acoustic level at the Art Park on Outlook Drive from Oct. 27 to 29, as local music artists perform acoustic hits while patrons and artists alike are available to take their picture. In the evenings, watch classic horror movies in a cozy bonfire ensemble at the Chalet; night on.

White Party: White + Fab – On Oct. 28, relent to the rules of the night as the Camp John Hay White Party blasts off at the Golf Clubhouse. Dress your whitest, be the coolest and fashion ardent that they are imagine a fantastic prize awaits the most fabulous white outfit! R&B bands and party music will keep the people dancing, while a Beer Drinking Contest by San Miguel Beer's Oktoberfest outfit (the prize will keep the beers flowing).

Halloween Party on Town & Country + Glass Street Party – Children of all ages will have a memorable Halloween experience on Oct. 31, as they participate in a camp-wide Halloweena Trick-or-Treat activity at the Forest Hill, while a mime show and superhero kiddie program awaits them after-awards at the Art Park.

In the evening, The Halloween weekend culminates with a Boo!-Tiful Party at the Art Park, Dahlias Drive (in front of the Filling Station). Sweet musical dance performances by the grand champions of the Hip Hop International Competition in Paris, funk and a hip-a-gogo band gets the party rolling, and the guests crowning the best-worst pop icons or Gods + Glory outfits will take home prizes.

The Camp John Hay Halloween Weekend 2006 is presented by the Camp John Hay Development Corporation, Globe Telecom Inc., San Miguel Beer Oktoberfest, in cooperation with the Camp John Hay Manor, the Camp John Hay Golf Club Inc., La Chef @ the Manor, Kisik Inc. and 98.7 iGMa. For more information, you may call the Marketing Sales and Public Relations Office at (074)-447-8000 to Manila, at (074)-442-2782 in Baguio.

THE BELLEVUE HOTEL EMPLOYEES WIN FIRST AID CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION

Ten officious and well-trained employees of The Bellevue Hotel topped the 16th National SOPI-PNRC First Aid CPR Competition, an event organized by the Safety Organization of the Philippines Inc. (Sopi) and the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) at the Bonifacio Technological Institute in Mandaluyong. (Photo from: The Bellevue employees Ericson - Ferrer/Villanueva (housekeeping), PNRC trainer Tito Vic Almonte, Renato Ramirez (security), Jonathan Dado (security), Nel Esperanzate (security manager), Patrick Chua (general manager), second row - Arnel Tecson (engineering), Anne Noel de Guzman (housekeeping), Jeny Bacalso (HR manager), John Domingo (marketing), Dennis Bayhon (sales and marketing), 3rd row - engineer Noel Lacuna (chief engineer), Salvador Almeda (housekeeping), Philip Garcia (security) 1st Dominga Bodoy and Soveryn Lanip Marisa (front office).) In preparation for the competition, Bellevue employees took up a rigorous month-long training at the hotel, where they were educated in the aspects of safety and first aid such as basic life support for adult and child, situational analysis and application, bandaging roles, transfer carrying roles and other safety issues.

Quantum Hotels & Resorts' new VP for sales and marketing

THE MANAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF Quantum Hotels & Resorts is pleased to announce the appointment of Joey Sevilleno as vice-president for sales and marketing. A seasoned hotelier with more than 32 years of experience in the industry, the position has served as a member of international chain hotels in the Philippines and held top key positions in operations and sales and marketing. A VP sales and marketing for Manila Bay Resorts & Resorts, Sevilleno will be in charge in setting forth the direction for the company's sales and marketing endeavors for its five properties, namely The Bellevue Manila, the Subic Bay Peninsula, the Tower and Subic Bay Villas.

Marco Polo Davao tops culinary fest

FOR THE THIRD TIME, BANCO FILIPINO HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED as the country's culinary champion. The Marco Polo Davao international hotel carried the robust trophy after bagging nine gold medals, six silver, and five bronze at the culinary competition held at the Mandarin Culinary Festival at the SECC Convention Center. Marco Polo Davao's nine golds surpassed its last year's six. The hotel had its chefs, bakers, waiters, bartenders and its spa participating in the event's professional category, where they posted a whopping total of seven golds, two of which – the Bakeshop Decorated Showpiece and the SFU Market Basket and ABC Home Floor Artistic Bread Display. Other awards were garnered from Nestle Food Services Market Basket, Universal Food Solutions 3-D Competition, Fruit and Vegetables Carving, Walter G. Ledo, and Confection Arrangement. The silver and Thai Artistic Vegetable Carving competitions, all of Marco Polo Davao's entries to the competition won awards, with finished 21, including the championship trophy signifying the hotel's towering standard of excellence.

Only one number to call for your hotel reservations needs

THESE DAYS, BOOKING A HOTEL ROOM OR inquiring about its hotel amenities normally involves calling around hotels one by one. It's an easy only on travel agencies that offer a limited range of hotel and resort choices depending on the existing book ups they have with certain establishments.

One may also keep booking at the same hotel and resort hotel, afraid of risking his comfort and convenience, yet possible money we can better deals offered by other hotels of the same standard. Relying on word of mouth for a hotel's up-to-date information is not foolproof either, since it could plan to enter differs from person to person.

By calling just one hotline number, consumers can make inquiries or bookings on all hotels around the Philippines. With its extensive study, data on its more than 200 hotel partners formed in the company's top-of-the-line, PHRO can immediately answer a customer's query or book his hotel requirements without the need of returning his call.

PHRO's Central Hotel Reservation Hotline is (02)812-7477 (PHRO). Its website, www.phro.com.ph, provides supplemental information on its list of hotels such as detailed hotel information and amenities, pictures of rooms, and payment policies. And with the help of its reservation agents, clients can inquire on room rates in hotels that fall within the specified price range, making the search a lot simpler and quicker.

Hotel rates would also not be a problem as current customers are assured that its prices are lower than the hotels' published rates, depending on the seasons and the classification of the property. Clients can get from 30 to as much as 75 percent discount.

Reservations can also be done by fax at (02)891-0226, text messaging at (0905)4642098, or through e-mail at info@phro.com.ph. The PHRO office is located at Room 808 Cambridge Bldg., 295 Salcedo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. It is open from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. while overseas calls are open from Monday to Sunday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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People, Events & Products

Coocpea raises concern

THE COORDINATING COUNCIL OF PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS (Coocpea), which is the voice of private schools and representing over 80 percent of the total number of higher educational institutions (HEIs) in the country, has raised its concern over the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) issuance of a memorandum order (CMO) prescribing a new nationwide uniform tuition and other school fees policy for the academic year 2006-2007.

Coocpea's chairman Dr. Ricardo Cardenas said that the CMO is a violation of the constitutional provision on academic freedom. "The CMO is a violation of the constitutional provision on academic freedom. The CMO is a violation of the constitutional provision on academic freedom. The CMO is a violation of the constitutional provision on academic freedom.

KAMIKAZEE. Hiwe-apin on the Ayo Hiking Society classic "Tres Bidas."

Reggae and rock videos with some, lose some

By Rina Jurado

FOR ONCE, IT'S HERE TO SEE A MUSIC video that doesn't talk about "being in love." Upcoming band Isla Ita is creating a stir among MTV aficionados with their reggae-rock single, "Barbada Ka." The chorus goes: "Kaming lahat ay hindi pamasahe kundiga sa kalsada" among ano? Magkasama naan man patunguin' Ilong talaga ang barbada ka."

Wholesome

The lyrics are simple and subversive, and everyone can easily sing along and memorize them. As the video, band members, composed of lead vocalist Bonny "Jalol" Cavalella, bassist Mark "Macoy" Bonita, drummer Pamuel "Tess" Damagayang, and guitarist Gerome "Skoosh" Cabalfin, come to the rescue when a red Volkswagen cuddy cut on the road.

Then, the scene transcends into another that shows the three-band/band performing on a beach, with the word "free" written all over them.

Unfortunately, the low-budget music video looks energized and unmemorable. Even cameos in video production in schools look better. While the gaps succeed in delivering a distinctively refreshing reggae beat, what they should have done was hire a talented director who could execute fresh concepts that would suit their instrumental roots to music and theme.

On the other hand, the wild beats of Kamikazee are again turning heads—and opening ears—as they connect the Apo Hiking Society's well-loved OPM song "Tres Bidas."

Unique style

Since they met, music fans have patronized the group's punk rock and heavy metal vibes because of their unique style. In the MTV, lead vocalist Jay Contreras' hyperactive movements rid the TV screen.

Directed by Nepel Lee, the video uses fast cuts to complement the band's palpable energy. The boys play Indians who dangle peace pipes and smoke signals as they are seen recalling a fire.

At the end, when the words "Tres Bi" are blurred out, an Indian girl (played by Alexis Gil) comes out of the fire—to the boys' surprise and delight. Quite entertaining, indeed!

Folk tales and urban legends live on

From page E1

magpa-in (bahasa-in ebade in Vigan).

Unfortunately, the rest of the cast don't do as well. Many of them look lost amidst the chaos of a script that doesn't know what it wants to say—either they're expressionless, or they try too hard to impress by resorting to wisecracking, eye drum-smashing histrionics (Ya'ntsa Duyos, Gian Lorenzo).

The production's biggest blunders, however, are its dodgy research and its makers' misguided penchant for "westernizing" local mythology. It stands on a shaky premise that supernatural sightings/stories that having to mirror those Kalkan (their efforts are the same). (James Mc-Clinton, in an article on wikipedia, describes how having...which actually derived its name from a local bamboo—is performed today the east (more).

Local movies should take advantage of the richness of our culture and folk tales. But, good films require more than just good intentions. You must not "accessorize" an already colorful mythology—whether real or imagined...with details that make it more laughable than reverential.

JOSE. Impressive is an understatement with.

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Studdard is looking for love

NEW YORK — AFTER WINNING "AMERICAN IDOL" in 2003, Ruben Studdard became an instant superstar. His face was plastered everywhere; his debut album, "Soulful," went platinum in six seconds ... he even had a bona fide hit, "Sorry."

But, after that initial bonanza, the lovable (he so-called "Velvet Teddy Bear" seemed. His gospel album, 2004's "I Need an Angel," was barely noticed, and an other "Idols" were crowned, he found that his prestige as a former winner had so unproven date.

Third album

Now, as the 28-year-old soul singer releases his third album, "The Return," he finds himself rocking markets small and large, hoping America would fall in love with their "American Idol" again. Inskilled an donor with The Associated Press to talk about his music, weight loss, and why he is looking for love.

STUDDARD. Wants to be taken seriously.

How hard has it been to break away from the "American Idol" typecast?

Honestly, I never want people to forget I won the show. But, I do want people to take me seriously as an artist outside of "American Idol."

Do you look at Kelly Clarkson as a model, since she is now a Grammy-winning, multi-platinum star with cred?

Of course, I do. Everybody who has left that show looks at her as a model for what we want to do to further our careers. It wasn't easy for her to get that "American Idol" stigma changed. She also had to work hard — and it paid off.

Market

On the first album, I didn't have to go out and do radio promos, because people already knew who I was. With this third project, I have to reintroduce myself to the market.

You lost weight. Was losing weight deliberate on your part as a way to promote the album?

Everything on artist comes out, he has to reinvent himself. That is why it was necessary for me to get in shape, to have something different going to promote my new album. I wanted to get in shape because I have a family history of diabetes and high blood pressure.

I felt it was necessary to exhibit those issues at a young age before it becomes a problem. I went to Duke Diet & Fitness Center for a month and learned how to change my eating habits. Two weeks after I started to exercise, it's been wonderful!

The "Today" show reported that you lost 100 pounds ...

They said 130 pounds. I told them 75.

What has been the hardest food to give up?

The hardest to give up was chicken. Right now, I am trying my hardest to stay away from fried chicken.

Fitness program

How hard is it to stay on this fitness program?

One thing I had to figure out is that, there are just so many healthy choices in food as there are bad ones. When I'm ordering with a group, I just look for the healthy choice. Working out is hard, because my schedule is so hectic.

A lot of former "Idols" and finalists are coming out with albums this season. Do you feel added pressure?

No. We are in different genres. Kelly's music is rock, Clay Aiken is in adult contemporary, I'm urban. Even if we were in the same market, I still wouldn't feel that way, because we are family.

What do you think about the state of R&B music today?

Hip-hop has taken over. It's harder for R&B artists to get records played on the radio. It's not a bad thing because I grew up listening to hip-hop. We've all had to step our style a little. Back in the day, I remember when hip-hop artists used to want to be on R&B songs. Now, it's the other way around.

Do you ever get tired of being recognized?

When I won, it was hard, because I didn't want to be bothered. But, I understand it's part of my job. Fans are always happy to see their idols.

Everything that a celebrity has a because of the fans who put them his albums and concert tickets. When they don't want your autograph, that you should be worried.

Worst diva moment

What was your worst diva moment?

My worst moment happened when this crude lady threw her papers on the table and was, like, "Sign this!" — I mean 'cue in'.

Most of your songs are about love. Are you looking for love?

Yes. I think we all do. I don't think there's anyone out there who wants to be by himself. I don't want to be alone for the rest of my life.

AP

Next time someone tells you to get lost, tell them you can't.

Link4411

TING: National Artist for Theater

SATURDAY Special

Lessons learned from top directors

By Nestor U. Torre

WE STARTED OUR theater and media career as an actor, but soon also wrote scripts and directed a number of productions. We did take screen-writing courses in the States, but our aptitude for directing was found on the job, as it were, since we were nurtured by some excellent directors and learned a lot from closely observing them at work.

Imagination

We were still in school when we were directed by Armando Suñeze and Fr. Victor Hello, SJ. From them, we learned to look for good scripts to direct, and to encore them with complicity, directorial and imaginative.

Taking up graduate studies in the States, we were directed by the late Jo Bacon, whose love for theater (theatre) we also acquired. In England, we played the title character in "Achilles and the Slugs of Troy," and learned from our young director, the son of the British ambassador to the Philippines, to be passionate about theater.

Strong impression

He influenced our "international" cast for a very long time in order to come up with the best possible dress and set production (non-sectarian). That made a strong impression on me, and taught me that, in the arts, excellence is an overarching endeavor.

Truly, nothing but the best will do. Jo Bacon taught for a year or till mid-dramatic year again, this time, in performing of excerpts from Shakespeare's plays, "This Mortal Coil."

Jo Bacon's staging was so well received that many of the country's best directors went out of their way to see the show—and we benefited from the exposure.

Before we leave it, Joey Gosiengfiao had a appetite to act for him in a UP production (but was so glaringly jeered by top reviewer Mel) Ulanday that it quickly led to other offers.

New thrust

From Joey, we learned to be playful and to humanize, and this enabled us to laser more fun onstage. We welcomed the new thrust, because we were too closely serious about theater in those days.

We were also thrilled to be mentioned by the country's top theater couple, Behn and Lutgi Arellano. We appreciated their combination of extraordinary passion and eleventy-fight creativity.

The kinetic and maverick Behn Cervantes also directed us in a number of

LESSONS F3

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ANAKOR: Energy and truth

Lessons learned from top directors

From page F1

musicals and activist plays. We enjoyed his command and resourcefulness, appreciated, and learned his love for musical theater coaching.

At the Manila Theater Guild, Bill Kane directed us in a way currently that was so physically demanding that we dedicated our shoulder just before the play opened.

We had to perform with our arms in a sling—and we learned yet another lesson about the exciting nature of our theatrical endeavors.

Then at TMT, Jaime Laredo directed us in another comedy. Like Kane, Laredo's directing style was lighthearted, and we learned that theater could be fun. Our last year, Jesus Sebastian was brilliantly severe and insightful.

Majority

We were directed by other theatrical top guns, but the majority of the performances we were directed by Amanda Amacker and near National Artist for Theater Rolando Tinio.

We lifted tuxedos; we did some 15 plays. From her, we learned the value of energy and truth in performance.

We acted the most for Rolando—some 10 plays, most of them at the CCP's Frame Filipino. He was audaciously experimental, stressed versatility, enjoyed word play, and made you think that you could do anything.

Thus, under his direction, we "dared" to play Rendel, Shylock and a host of other demanding characters created by Shakespeare and other masters of world theater.

Tinio's lesson we learned that, in his commanding presence, you need to have your own point of view about human experience, develop the skills and determination required to make that vision come to life in the most intrigid form, and respect and love your actors—and your audience. All else is theatrical sycophancy!

GOSENGFIAO: Playful.

Man versus animal in 'Open Season'

By Mentari Tarra

WHILE PROMOTING THE ANIMATED FILM, "Open Season," Martin Lawrence, who voiced a major character, has this to say about his co-star, Ashton Kutcher: "I didn't have the opportunity to meet Ashton. Yet, when I watched the finished movie, you would think we had hung out."

Seeing as Lawrence and Kutcher's characters spend most of their screen time with each other, the fact that they've never met—much less do a recording together—sounds pretty odd.

Result

Apparently, however, this is the way they often do it in Hollywood, especially when the voice talent is a big star who's much too busy to schedule recording sessions with other equally busy big stars. The result often sounds slightly askew, but the audience usually doesn't notice. In "Open Season," however, we do.

Lawrence is the voice of Boog, a pampered bear raised in town, who doesn't know anything about living in the wild. Elliot, a mule deer whom Boog rescues, and who then proceeds to "wreck" his life by coaxing him to be more wild in the wild, is voiced by Kutcher.

It's an odd-couple scenario a la Shrek and Donkey ("Shrek"), but without the chemistry. Boog and Elliot look like they're relating to each other, but they sound like they're coming from two different planets—they don't gel. And since they're the main stars there, this disjointedness is glaring.

Antics

Aside from the lack of chemistry between its two leads, the movie also suffers from a lack of originality. Take away Elliot's antlers, and you can add "Jim Donkey Thupendo the temperate landscape, and you can call it Michigan-ia.

On the plus side, the visuals are good. Fabrics look touchable, metals are, well, metallic, and the hairs on both animals and human characters (and more so though they're underground) the best science numbers.

Everything is colored much brighter than it is in real life, which has the effect of making the movie feel hyper-real and cartoonish at the same time.

Also on the plus side is the story's development in the film's final half. If you've seen the trailers, then you'll know that the movie isn't just a hunter flick, it's also an animal-vs.-man confrontation.

Development

So if you're old enough to remember having cried over the death of Bambi's mommy, you can think of this development as "Bambi: The Revenge."

All in all, the movie is fast-paced and action-packed enough to amuse the 10 year-olds in the audience, and even most discerning adults will laugh once in a while.

It's just that, since it's the debut feature of Sony Pictures Animation, you expect to be wowed, not just mildly entertained.

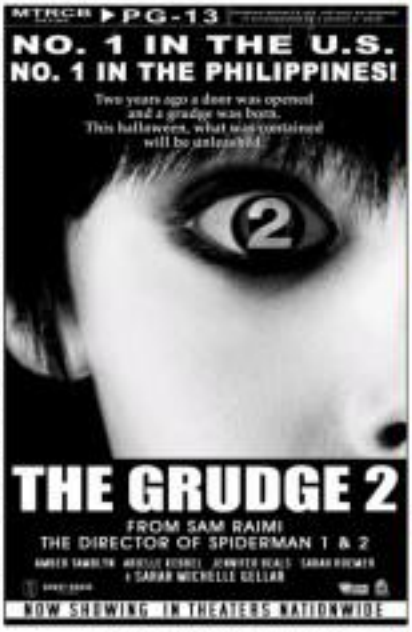

Exhibit marks Ramon Orlina's 30th year

ORLINA with the world-often 8-foot-tall high sculptures, "Sangkatauhan" for UST's quadricentennial.

RAMON ORLINA HAS found splendor in the glass. Choosing to specialize in art pieces fashioned from this medium, he has earned no insignificant niche for himself in Philippine art.

His works in glass plus have become his trademark—solid, shimmering curves, angles and contours that beguile those who see them.

Passion

These days, Orlina's passion for glass has only grown stronger. This mark is evident as he presents his exhibition, "Quintessence," to celebrate his 30 years in sculpture at the Metropolitan on the second floor of the Glass Wing of Ayala Museum in Makati Avenue, Makati City. The show formally opened last Thursday and runs until Nov. 5.

"Quintessence" is part of the annual Investco's Choice series, in which Ayala Museum director, Dr. Yvonne Cajipe-van Bokay chooses an artist to sponsor in a solo exhibit.

Interestingly, Orlina celebrates three decades of his craft, not by holding a retrospective of his works, but by presenting what else is possible in his chosen medium.

The exhibit has features new sculptures in glass, in a mixture of colors—green, amber, red, pure black and beyond. It also includes works combining glass with materials such as stainless steel.

The show presents textiles and is headed by one of Orlina's most recent commissions. "Enraghaled" is an 8.6-meter structure, cast in bronze, with glass elements that will be unveiled at the University of Santo Tomas, the sculptor's alma mater, salute its celebrations its quadricentennial in 2011.

Another highlight of "Quintessence" is a bronze piece cast from one of Orlina's glass sculptures—an indication of his constant quest to push artistic boundaries.

Learning process

"For me, it's a continuous learning process. The artist's role is to create, and develop new forms and ideas," Orlina explains.

This attitude has served the artist well. His glass creations have evolved through the years. He started with prismatic pieces, then he developed organic forms, sculptures with holes, while incorporating a definite range of textures.

Ramon explains, "Glass is endlessly intriguing. The piece a challenge for me to explore its possibilities."

"DIAMOND 141." Sculptures combine Swarovski crystal and Asahi glass.

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Lunes hanggang Linggo, umaga hanggang gabi.

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Let's Go
Star Magic Presents "Love in the City"
Komiks presents Da Adventures of Pedro Penduko
TV Patrol Sabado
XXX
Pinoy Dream Academy
Aalog-alog
Manny Pacquiao Send-Off Concert
Sports Unlimited

PRIMETIME BIDA

Pangako Sa'yo
TV Patrol World
Kapamilya Deal or No Deal
Super Inggo
Maging Sino Ka Man
Pinoy Dream Academy
Crazy For You
Maalaala Mo Kaya (Isang Biyernes)

LINGGO

ASAP '06 5:30 p.m.
Your Song
Love Spell presents HOME SWITCH HOME
The Buzz
Goin' Bulilit
TV Patrol Linggo
Rated K
Sharon
Pinoy Dream Academy
Sunday's Best
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Pilipinas, Game K N B?
Wowowee
Kapamilya Cinema

Monday Kahit Minsan
Tuesday Impostora
Wednesday Walang Maring Dickeyan Ang Bangbang
Thursday Walang Aalang Sa Akin
Friday Bahaghari Jack

Inocente De Ti
KOYPI, IKAW BA 'TO?

CORRESPONDENTS

SATURDAY Special

Cage as Eastwood; Eastwood as Huston

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN NICOLAS CAGE launched his acting career, he went the romantic lead route, with screen heartthrob roles in films like "It Could Happen to You" and "Moonstruck."

Soon after, however, he found acting in romantic comedies too limiting and, perhaps, too icky for words, so he modulated his movie image to enable him to veer in new directions.

Age-related issues

As he continued to mature, Cage had to face up to the age-related issues that usually confront actors in their 40s or 50s. Some overenthusiastic bloggers try to build back the hands of Time by resorting to makeovers and other interventions involving plastic surgery.

But, Cage has turned out to be made of sterner stuff. As his appearances and performance in "World Trade Center" indicate, he seemed to have taken his cue from actors like Clint Eastwood, who proudly wears his age on his sleeve—and on his craggy face.

As a result, Cage may be losing some spending-savings first, but he's gained a lot in terms of romance and psychological "weight" as a performer. He's also well on his way to looking like a real person, instead of a movie star, so many movie viewers will be able to empathize with him.

As Eastwood's career has shown, that's a big plus factor in a mainstream actor's career, because it enables him to espouse an Everyman persona that "ordinary" viewers find extraordinarily appealing.

CAGE. 'Tension and psychological "weight."'

Interesting developments

It would also make it easier for him to woo directors, again like Eastwood. That would be a particularly interesting development, because Cage's uncle, Francis Ford Coppola, and his cousin, Sophia Coppola, are both gifted and acclaimed directors—so, Cage may have his class's directorial genes going for him, as well?

For his part, Eastwood at 76 also appears to be moving into a new phase in his film career. Not only is he a great director, but his work in his latest film, "Flags of Our Fathers," has taken on an elevated, timeless quality that calls to mind the iconic movies mugged by the illustrious John Huston.

Even more uncannily as he continues to age, Eastwood is beginning to also look like Huston, whose own craggy countenance would look right at home on Mount Rushmore.

EASTWOOD. Proudly wears the ages on his sleeve.

Heroism

Another shared element that binds Cage and Eastwood is the fact that their most recent films, "World Trade Center" and "Flags of Our Fathers," are both tales of heroism.

"Flags" is more forthright than Cage's one-ner, because it doesn't stop at presenting its heroes; it goes on to ask questions about the nature of heroism itself.

Thus, even as "World Trade Center" has more plausible, "Flags of Our Fathers" could turn out to be the more controversial and significant production, because it dares to go deeper into the heart of the essence of heroism itself, and why so few people seem to possess it in these confoundingly cynical times.

HUSTON. His craggy countenance would look right at home on Mount Rushmore.

Disney's 'Nemo' finds new life as a stage musical

NEW YORK—IF YOU LOVE THEM looking for lessons, that rebellious fish from the 2003 animated film, "Finding Nemo," you can soon find him onstage, along with his overprotective clown fish of a father, Marlin, and the movie's other aquatic characters.

Disney is converting the undersea tale of Marlin's adventurous search for Nemo, who is scooped up by a diver, into what company officials are calling a "Broadway-caliber short-form" stage musical.

NEMO. From film to stream.

Preview

Previews [illegible] months of "Finding Nemo—The Musical" are set to begin next month, and the premiere is set for January next year in the 1,500-seat Theater in the Wild at Disney's Animal Kingdom Park at the Walt Disney World resort in Orlando, Florida.

The production marks the first time Disney has made a musical of a non-musical animated film, said Anne Hamburger, executive vice president of Disney Creative Entertainment, who was at Manhattan's Palace Theatre recently where two animated puppets—including Nemo—were presented, and costumers performed two songs from the musical.

Special effects

Using animated backdrops, lighting, sound and special effects, The Theater in the Wild will be transformed into a magical underwater wonderland populated with puppets, dancers and animated backdrops, Hamburger said. There will be top-flanking sharks, like riding puppets and a punk performance by the green sidekicks, Bruce, Chum, Gill and Anchor.

The musical will run for 50 minutes, compared to the one-hour and 44-minute movie, which grossed hundreds of millions of dollars at the box office, Hamburger said. To make the underwater environment come alive, Disney officials enlisted some of Broadway's and the movie's most well-known names.

Puppets

Peter Brosius, artistic director of The Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is directing the musical. Roberta Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, who won co-creator and co-composer of the Tony Award-winning "Avenue Q," composed original songs for the new musical. Michael Curry, who co-created the character puppets in Broadway's "The Lion King," is creating the puppetry for the new show.

In the musical, main characters, Nemo, Marlin and Dory, will appear as animated puppets operated by live performers, Curry shared. New technology and other tricks will give the stage an "underwater" feeling. Hamburger would not say how much Disney is spending to create "Finding Nemo—The Musical." AP

FOOTBOT — BY ALLAN ARIAS

A. UPIN — BY JOE AGREDA

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH JUNIOR

HUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

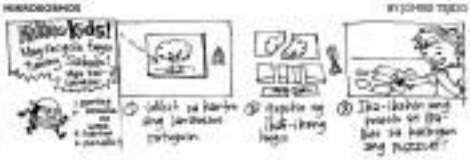
LOVEKNOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHOMICKI

ATOMO AND WEBSY — BY LINA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN MANALOYO

BIRD MACHINE — BY MARK AREN

HOROSCOPES — BY JOHN TEJIDO



TUGON — BY NPA LAND TATUM PHILIPPINE BIAG

BEH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

				6				
			3		1			
1		8				2		3
	8		7		3		1	
7								4
	4		2		9		5	
4		3				5		9
			6		4			
				8				

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	1	9	4	6	3	5	8	2
3	4	6	9	5	2	1	7	8
2	8	5	7	1	8	6	3	4
4	6	7	1	3	9	2	8	5
1	3	5	8	6	4	7	9	3
9	8	3	2	7	5	4	1	6
6	3	2	5	9	1	8	4	7
5	7	1	3	4	8	6	2	9
8	9	4	6	2	7	3	5	1

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'Simpsons' turns 18

LONG-RUNNING cartoon series has lampooned nearly every aspect of American life and culture.

LOS ANGELES—As SNL SIMPsons sings into his 18th season of TV mischief, fans will be glad to know that creator Matt Groening says no end in sight for the wayward kid of "The Simpsons."

Groening's reasoning is sound: The show is fun to make, fun to watch, just earned its 23rd Emmy, and is finally jumping on the big screen with a summer 2007 movie—almost 18 years after the rest of Springfield's first family.

Attitude

"At this point, my attitude is: As long as the people who work on the show are having a good time, let's keep doing it," he said. "We've always tried to entertain ourselves and figured that the outside world would also be entertained if we were making ourselves laugh."

The key: Keep surprising the audience, which he achieved, adapt but become tougher because the show has "invented many territories" through the years. It has, in fact, brilliantly lampooned nearly every aspect of American life and culture.

"But, there's a good-natured spirit of competitiveness among the youngest writers on the staff who basically grew up watching the show and have great memories of everything that's gone before," he said.

The writers don't want to disappoint the nation—nor to mention the world. The series is seen in more than 70 countries, subtitled with scads of "Simpsons"-based neologisms, has made it a reported billion-dollar cartoon cash cow for News Corp., Fox's parent.

Crash and burn

"The people on the staff are determined not to be the people who will cause the show to crash and burn. We still try to top ourselves," Groening added.

"The Simpsons" has been renewed by Fox for its 19th year. The ensemble voice cast includes Nancy Cartwright as Bart, Dan Castellaneta as dad Homer, Julie Kavner as mom Marge, Yeardley Smith as sister Lisa, Harry Shearer as four roles, actors Albert Brooks and Hank Azaria as police Chief Wiggum (Azaria and several others in the cast perform multiple voices).

Recently, it went to ninth Emmy for best animated series and has also received four voiceover performances, seven writers Emmys. Groening called the latest award "a thud in the arm. I thought people might be jaded but, no, they're not!"

The program is known for its zoftie guest stars, and promises not to disappoint this season. In succession in which Lisa helps the bartender, Moe, become a poet, she encounters Irene Nidal and Tom Bridis, voiced by the literary giants themselves. "They don't usually do cameos. You don't see them on 'SpongeBob,'" Groening coyly noted. AP

Cycle of birth and death

LOTUS POND

R. Valenciano and S. Rimmark

LIVING AND DYING ARE SUBJECTS that scientists intelligent beings. How one explains them depends on one's religion.

The body is but material dust, and shall be scattered to all directions after death. It's a temporary garment of the eternal soul. Birth and death go hand in hand: A death sentence is automatically handed down upon birth.

Worldly possessions

Death is serious for the materialistic soul; it detaches man from worldly possessions. He feels deep pain for losing things he can't own permanently. Maslow's Living blinds us to the cycle of birth and death. Spiritual life leads us back to our home beyond the material sphere.

A sage lives a full and meaningful life; he departs from the world as an enlightened and liberated being. Where a person leads an unrealistic life, he is chained to the cycle of birth and death, and suffers the consequences of his actions.

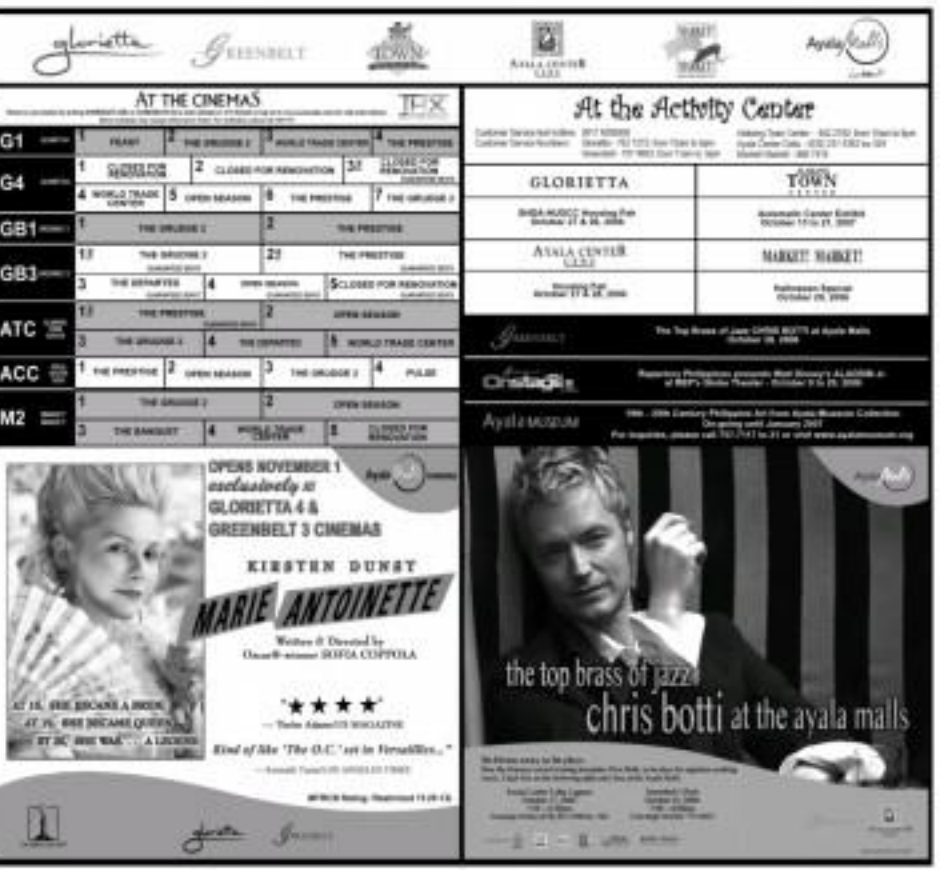
Dying is as easy as living for the self-realized soul. He knows who he is, where to go, and how to attain happiness. He sees the body for dust, and the soul, it exists beyond the material measures left behind by the unthinkable soul. There's no one residing inside it.

Existence

Death is but a door to another chapter of our existence. It's a step up or a step down. A wise sage always seeks a higher level of existence. As active being cannot stand the idea that death is equivalent to eternal rest—a concept of death that to aspirants to happy, enlightened souls who find joy in being service to the Supreme.

ABS DONATES TO ABS-CBN

ROBERT Hernandez (2nd from right), president of the Alyansa ng bolsista ng Pilipo (Abolo) Inc., presents a pledge of donation for 50 bags of rice to the Tulay Kapamilya Project of ABS-CBN Foundation, represented by Jocelyn Sau-Ribo in the photo are (from left to right), Mary Ann Magno, Vic Agum and Juan Manolo Jurio's national officers were inducted into office by Vice President Noli de Castro last Oct. 12 at Club Filipino.



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SATURDAY Special

More hits than misses in Hotdog retrospective

By Rica R. Rubio

IN "HOTDOG: THE 4 A.M.F. HOTDOG CORE jukebox," stars of ABS-CBN's popular Sunday musical variety show reinvisualize the timeless tunes of the popular '80s band, Hotdog.

But, unlike the recent "Basic-ASIN Music" albums (the former mainly keeps the group's lovely, radio-friendly songs in their original melodic rhythm and format—for most of its 14 tracks, anyway.

Purists

If the spa tilting Sunny retrospective—which featured the country's top pop, rock and alternative bands...heavily rapped, teamed with a refreshing, multi-genre sound that alienated some purists; the Hotdog collection keeps the changes to a minimum by merely adjusting the songs' musical arrangements to give them a more contemporary and homogenized sound. Result: The album has more women-to-fast fans.

Gary Valenciano delivers a revealing, guitar-driven rendition, located further by the performer's distinctive rhythm and groove style. Another dance-floor winner is Gloryn Regis' straightforward version of "Bonggo Ito Day," which allows the petite belter to play around when the song reaches its higher parts...without breaking to melodic form.

Toni Gonzaga (see) and Sarah Geronimo, who possess the toughest voice in pop music. Certainly she padded vocals in her records prove that the multi-media star acknowledges the lush and lushy her sweet vocals, but she sees lessons how to choose her songs, arrangers—and sound engineers. Case in point: Her sensuous, pop and hip-hop fusion of "Annie Stranglehold," featuring Mitoni.

The recent remake of Donna Cruz's "Kapag Nawalak ang Puso" for the soundtrack of the movie with the same title was one of the best things about the film. Her rendition of Dawn Gil's "I Love You Boy" for the teen flick, "Tiny Dog High," also deserves special mention. What's next, Toni? Irma Bonanza's "Bahit Ka Gumuwi", Marivi Soriano's "Oh My Papa!" or Imelda Santos's "Sana Di Ka Sabo?"?

Sam Milby's rock-inspired rework, however, sap the bittersweet quality of "Langit na Naman." Until when brilliant idea was it to change the lyrics, "Di inaapuhi kahit kay Sin Lucas" to "Di inaapuhi kahit kanyang bisig," anyway? She is over lonelier now than during her reign as the country's top sexy star in the '90s).

Isabelle Anne Go ("Nanggang"), Nina ("I, Luvmore Ka") and Christian Bautista ("Dying to Tell You," one of only two English songs) come up with well-sung versions.

But, it's Mark Bautista and an endearingly playful Anne Curtis who deliver one of the collection's most enjoyable tracks, "Bek, Bek, Bek."

Biggest surprise

The biggest surprise in the whole package is teen queen, Sarah Geronimo, who shines the brightest in her covers, as Gilla version of "Pwede." The girl hardly uses her famous sweeping vibrato in this track.

Sadly on select covers, despite her passionate pipes, Geronimo couldn't really win critical admiration, because she kept pushing her the high notes to please no-care fans. She also lost a penchant for subtlety, missing the circles and vocal alterations of pop music's first queens like Celine Dion. "Pwedak" shows there's hope for young Sarah, after all!

Pinky Pascual has also improved as a singer, and sings a serviceable remake of "Kasi ang Mga Chinese ang Bahay Ko"—although he blows everytime he tries some improvisational cadences. At least, the characteristic groan isn't obvious here...

Pleasant noise

Jed Madela has one of the music industry's best and most powerful pipes, but he fails to catch our attention in "Ikaw Pa Rin." Strong chorus of sorts, perhaps? Nikki GO ("Kasi Naman") has a pleasant voice, but its vocal register is not distinctive enough.

Appropriately capping the starkly produced album is a duet by one of Hotdog's top lunchers, Rene Garcia, and Jun Jun Padilla. (as Jun married her colorful recording career as one of Hotdog's vocalists more than two decades ago, before she found solo singing stardom via her memorable debut album, "Am I Your Kind of Woman?"

DEFICIENCY. Sarsar, ex-Ally version of "Pwede."

check the Lifestyle Section every other week for the latest in SM Advantage promos and highlights.

Getting to know Cinemalaya 2007's semi-finalists

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN THE LIST OF 25 SEMI-FINALISTS in the full-length category of the 2007 Cinemalaya showcase film competition was recently announced, it generated unusual interest and excitement among movie buffs.

In one of those just-in-case moments, it's going to be a wrong contest. In fact, it can even be said that it's going to be a competition among winners!

Some other film buffs agree with his perception. What do they mean by a "competition of winners?"

'Pedigree'

They elaborate by pointing to the "pedigree" of some of the semi-finalists.

Joel Reiz ("Sa Gusting Dito, Tabon, at ang Mundo") directed "Manayon," which won the best short film award in Cinemalaya 2005.

Antonio Jr. Dyogi ("Tuos") directed "Ang Pagbabalaga ni Mariano Ghoc, etc.," which has won numerous awards, both here and abroad.

Adolf Alix Jr. ("Caras") won the top prize in the film development program's national screenwriting contest when he was only 17 years old, and scripted "Exiled" for Cinemalaya 2006.

James Arnold Ludloway ("LAWF") has won a Palanca screenplay award.

Adolfo Del Mundo Jr. ("Ligo") is a former Lion, whose "Iisang" (proposed, Bernardo and Anna Liza Bautista) garnered a playwriting award before it was made famous a Principe for the Cinemalaya competition.

Previous credits

Our sources also cite the previous credits of some other semi-finalists:

Reggie Guelle ("Ay Nililiw ng Dyos o Hindi Inyon") is a Reel Awards editor and short filmmaker.

Jade Castro ("Endo") penned the script for the award-that Cinema movie, "First Day High."

Dennis Marasigan ("Tuos") is a theater actor-writer-director, has directed the full-length film, "Go North (Dreams Road," and is the incoming artistic director of the UCP's Tanghalang Filipino.

Arnold Mesiglesa ("Tony en si Tony") was a finalist in the Film Institute's production of the Philippines' screenwriting competition.

FIRST CINEMALAYA BEST PICTURE WINNER, "PEPOT ARTISTAS" LEAD ACTOR ELIJAH CASTILLO AND WRITER-DIRECTOR JOEY DEL MUNDO: Which of the 25's contenders await your will similarly vamp off with the top prize?

Reynaldo Mendo ("Mga Ina, Mga Anak") is another ISPP screenwriting finalist. His entry's director, Rito Asilo, is the associate artistic director of the New Wave Theatre Company.

Jay Abello ("Ligaw Liham") is an assistant director for TV and films.

Choreographer

Bodly Sora ("Fishof") penned the screenplay for the full-length mainstream film, "Hindi." He co-produced, Jerome Reyes, is a choreographer of note.

Paul Morales ("Tinggitin ng Ming") is also a choreographer, and has been involved in short and indie filmmaking.

Chuchubebe Cabarrus ("Nang Umuwi Pinghihat ang Binisayang Low-up") is an editor and short and indie filmmaker.

Agnes de Guzman ("Ann Go Pong Pong") is the head writer of the "Maynila" drama series.

Arbet Segumentino ("Pagbaba ng Talon") directs commercials and produces for NGOs and other organizations.

Jim Libiran ("Erika") is a short filmmaker.

Ed Lejano Jr. ("Smuggling to Heaven") teaches film and has made a full-length movie for Regal.

The remaining semi-finalists also have good things going for them. They are Andrew Andoka Sky ("Ka Wilan, Ang Simula"), Noel Sheridana ("Puerto"), Aurel Datoc ("Ang sliped na Imahenge"), Jeremias Herya ("Child Life"), Charlodie Rivera ("Jade Glasgow ("Tidal"), Abdulmari Imao Jr. ("Ang Bendo; Dasadang Langit"), and Sheila Amante ("Bintot Chonki").

Achievements

Not the least of their achievements is the fact that their synopses have ended up among the competition's 25 semi-finalists...out of a field of 246 entries (some of which, it must be noted, were penned by well-known film practitioners). So, congratulations all around.

But, it should be pointed out that only 16 of the 25 semi-finalists will be chosen (based on their full scripts, please) to attend Cinemalaya 2007 finalists, each winning a P500,000 seed production grant from Tanglaw Cinemagic.

So, it's important that all entry finalists submit the best screenplays possible, after the initial hazards, the hard work continues.

Short and sweet directorial debut for Jennifer Aniston

LOS ANGELES—WHAT JENnifer Aniston really wanted to do was direct. And when the TV and film star wants, she usually gets.

The result, "Room 10," played out at a star-strewn Hollywood premiere recently at the Directors Guild of America.

The short film, co-directed by Jamison and Andrea Starkman, features Robin Wright Penn as a nurse, whose relationship with an emergency-room patient (Kiefer Sutherland) changes her life.

Aniston waited a long time to get behind the camera, the 37-year-old actress told AP Television.

Episodic

"I was scheduled to direct an episode of 'Friends.' Then, I got 'The Good Girl.' So, you either do the movie, or you get a bad direction of 'Friends.' But because I was doing there at the same time, I lost my directing shot. Why I never did it again after that, I don't know. It's just timing."

Aniston was in an upbeat mood as she strolled through the press gauntlet. On "Oprah," she revealed she is still with husband Vince Vaughn, though he was not there on the red-carpet line.

He, she told Winfrey, she hasn't had lesser nights. (She said she simply gained 10 pounds. But, yes, she does have a new bundle of joy in home: A five-month-old German shepherd puppy named Dolly.

Hottest topic

With the gossip set cleared, Aniston's work was the hottest topic on the red-side line. "What I really like about Aniston is that she knows what she wants," noted Kristofferson, who has worked with such directing heavyweights as Martin Scorsese, Alan J. Pakula and Tim Burton. "She's not afraid to tell an old guy like me what to do and how to do it."

Penn, who attended the premiere with actor-director husband, Penn, said Aniston "was very loving, calm, and knew what she wanted. She's not aggressive—screaming mean. But, she was assertive with her vision, and made sure that everybody was in the team together."

Magazine

"Room 10" was one of three films that resulted from "Glamour" magazine's "Reel Moments" competition, which began with stories submitted to the magazine.

Besides Jamison and Starkman, actress Rose Dollar Howard ("The Village") and comedy writer Carol Leifer (TV's "Seinfeld") each directed "Reel Moments" shorts that also debuted recently.

Aniston's summer blockbuster, "The Break-Up," arrived on DVD this month. She's credited as a producer on Scorsese's widely acclaimed boxer-drama "The Departed," and she's working on the thriller, "Wanted," in which she'll act alongside Hilary Swank. AP

ANISTON. Assumes additional roles.

Suzuki . . .

• From page 80

plus the a Dora Hall, Spike a-ter and Edied Ballet on Ballet School."

Nidetzky's Programmed will feature Shining Pool, Blue's Clue's Decade Spectacle, Spongebob and Sandy Swanson's Aquarium.

Log on to www.nickspike.com/longday. The event is sponsored by Bendel, Miller, Fly Wheels, Gatorade, Energizer, Exxon and Total Ltd.

PHM. Shows at Aramco Coliseum and Clark Expo.

Movies on TV

On Cinemax, today at 8:35 a.m., "Homicide." Tomorrow at 8:10 p.m., "The School of Rock." 8 p.m., "The Last Samurai." Oct. 30 at 1:20 p.m., "Oh e Chow Ting Wai Edi Bor Bureau." Oct. 31 at 5:35 p.m., "The Zone of Interests." 10:55 p.m., "Arlington Road." 2:30 p.m., "Cape Fear." Nov. 1 at 11 a.m., "Shine." 4:25 p.m., "Birthright." Nov. 2 at 2:50 p.m., "Billy" (1969). Nov. 3 at 2:40 p.m. "Land of the Pharaohs."

On HBO, today at 7 p.m., "Dash to the Future, 2." Tomorrow at 11:20 p.m., "Wag the Dog." Oct. 30 at 1:2 noon, "Stand by Me." Oct. 31 at 8:15 a.m., "The World According to Garp." 8 p.m., "The Manchurian Candidate." Nov. 1 at 5:30 p.m., "Spider-Man 2." Nov. 2 at 1:45 p.m., "Shrek." 7:15 p.m., "Loving Isaiah." 10:40 p.m., "Jerry Maguire." Nov. 3 at 9 p.m., "The Beat in Supremacy."

Samahan celebs epitomize gracious era of fashion, friendship

PEREZ, ACCETJANO ROMERO. Beauty and class—plus.

By Bobi Carvajales

IT WAS BARBARA PEREZ who first told me about her group, *Samahan*. She said she would invite me to one of its intimate get-togethers. The group is made up of stars from the vibrant '50s.

The group, Perez shared, gets together for socials and retreats. Aside from socializing and reminiscing about the "good ole days," the members also support advocacies worthy of their renowned names.

Colorful figures

Naturally, their reunions include updates on one another's lives and careers. With colorful figures like Perez, Susan Roces, Gloria Romero, Delia Razon, Marichu Maceda, Sarah Cabiri, Lilia Ebon, Liberty Flasin, Gloria Sevilla, Nikki Boer, Rosa Aurora Rius, and the late Helen Cruz, as well as "gentlemen of the old school" like Charlie Davao, and Bandi and Ripito Rodriguez, how can tasty dishes and political and professional gossip be far behind? Perhaps Rodrigo organizes these get-togethers, because she has maintained close ties with the stars of yesteryears.

When Barbara invited me to join the group, I hesitated. After all, I didn't belong to that revered circle of stars in the '50s. Of course, I was very familiar with them, but precisely because I was aware of the social and professional significance of that period, I realized that these celebrities should be given due respect and class.

Invitation

As a UP freshman, I remember Ateneo Carolina taking Lino Brocka and me to the guarded Gilmore studio, upon the invitation of Rosing Barbosa. Imee's cousin, our friend at Ateneo Theater under National Artist Dr. Severino Montano was then an assistant to Gilmore. I had a passing glimpse of her in very beautiful stars and starlet attires. Dr. Perez took it upon himself to care unknown beauties and dashing stars into ours.

Even in Hollywood, the way likes of Ava Gardner and Marilyn Monroe had given way to classy ladies like Audrey Hepburn and Grace Kelly. The former was a ballet dancer with royalty in her veins, while the latter was a Philadelphia heiress—who never went unusual without the proper pillbox hat and short white gloves.

Models

So, Doc Perez decided that the likes of Barbara, Susan, Gloria Romero, Amalia Fuentes, Daisy Romualdez, and Marlene Dauden should also study the same class. These women in fashion not only looked beautiful—they also conducted themselves as John Powers' models did.

They spoke correctly, and knew how to comport themselves among Manila's 400 to dinners and formal balls. In effect, Doc Perez single-handedly changed the popular perception that artistes were a notch lower than the acceptable norm, after he had transformed them, they mingled with high society's top hatitoids.

Contract stars

Because he made sure his beautiful contract stars dressed to honor seasons and behaved like ladies at society events, Gloria, Amalia, Dendensen, Barbara and Susan were soon handpicked by top designers like Mommy Valera, Pitoy Moreno and Ben Farolan to model their creations to the Manila Hotel's stately publishers' fashion shows for charity.

After all, didn't Amalia look like Elizabeth Taylor? Didn't Barbara resemble Audrey Hepburn? Didn't Susan remind oldtimers of the iconic Norma Shearer? Yes, the stars were invited beauties of that period like Rita Nacianda Abieras of Fashion on Wings, Miss Galaxy Elsa Peyuma, and Lollie Mara, who certainly has the feel, look and understanding of that period.

During the stars for Rolex, I went with Lollie. Many of the *Samahan*'s members were there. The hotel's new appointed general manager and a pirate there would bring us back to a period long gone, but nevertheless remembered through its members who epitomized that special era.

Enhancing quality of education through mass media

THE USE OF GRAHAM, TV sets and satellite dishes to enhance the quality of basic education have recently highlighted in a series of presentations to the United States.

Rina Lopez-Bautista, president of Knowledge Channel Foundation, Inc. (KCFI), shared her experience in the use of cable television to improve classroom instruction of basic subjects in elementary and high schools in the country.

Session

Addressing the roundtable session on science and technology at the 39th Annual United Nations Department of Public Information and Non-government Organization Conference in New York last Sept. 7, Lopez-Bautista recounted her group's "adventure" in bringing the Knowledge Channel's educational programs from the northernmost to the southernmost portions of the Philippines.

"We even had to employ

LOPEZ-BAUTISTA. A heaping hand for the poor.

seashore to deliver TV sets and satellite dishes to schools. Outrigger boats had to carry our equipment through plane-infested waters," Rina added.

"But, as we saw the bright faces of children watching educational TV for the first time, we knew that this was work that we should do," Lopez-Bautista stressed.

Research

In 1999, Rina decided to help address the persistent learning deficits, specifically her family's beachfront and cable TV networks ABS-CBN and SkyCable. She turned to on the public educational system after research indicated a crisis there.

Richard Brosas, who moderated the discussion, was so touched by Rina's story about the struggles of Filipinos, a Knowledge Channel beneficiary from the highlands, that he offered the girl a four-year scholarship to Mindanao Polytechnic College in New York.

Lopez-Bautista called on the US, affiliate organizations and donor institutions to look at KCFI's work, and to invest in the country.

Email wendymercurio@yahoo.com

Suzuki Music Kids in concert

AT THE HALLOWEEN TREAT "THE Monsters' Concert" at the Podium at 6 p.m. on Oct. 30, the Suzuki Music Kids will perform piano and violin pieces. The kids are students of the Greenhills Music Studio under Constancia Aquinaldo and her son, Ariel.

Mega's star-studded party

A star-studded party was held last Thursday at the SM Mall of Asia's Entertainment Center to welcome Megastar, Inside Showbiz magazine and Celebrity Living magazines to Mega Magazines & Publications' family. The event also marked 5 magazines's 10th anniversary and Inside Showbiz's second.

The extravaganza drew big names in entertainment, media and advertising. It was hosted by Sharon Apostol. Top shakers, Carlos Agassi, Lovi, Cogie Domingo, Ryan Tiamzon, CZ Rhones, Jackie Rice and Michael Appiol.

Guest performers included Jodi A, The Dawn, Wency Cornejo, Rabbani Mish, Hagibis, Randy Santos, Andy Abaya, Rachel Alejandro, Shawn Paolo, Ricky Rivero, Jobbit de Leon, Sandhrine Cruz, Cesar Montano and TJ Trinidad.

A highlight was Sonia Soriano's fabulous holiday fashion show. The event was supported by SM Development Corp., Carmela, Cesar's Gold, Sonia Collecting Services, Hilka, 907 Love Radio, 101.9 Brio 88.3 and 93.9 WRR.

Barbie on the big screen

A special screening of "Barbie in the 12 Dancing Princesses" will be held at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. today at Robinsons Cinemas 20. Barbie stars as Princess Genevieve in the magical musical adventure, along with her 11 sisters. They live a carefree life until their Aunt Rowena ties down the two, and they escape. But, they return when they learn that their father's life is in danger.

Barbie fans can catch the new adventure upon purchase of P200 worth of Happyvision Bliss at Shaklee and outlets of All Mall, Bremen or Gateway Graphics Mktg., or upon presentation of Bliss sealed Sweepy Graphic tickets.

CHILDREN from Greenhills Music Studio perform at the Podium on Oct. 30.

BARBIE. Stars in her latest magical musical adventure.

Bliss in Manila

Bliss, Barrie's dance diva, will perform on Nov. 24 at Araneta Coliseum and on Nov. 26 at Clark Expo. Her special guest is the Araneta Coliseum show is Christian Bautista. Bliss is the most popular exponent of "K-pop," or Korean Pop Music, and is about to make her hit international stardom. Call 911-5555.

'Killer Pigs'

On the Nat Geo Geographic Channel at 1 p.m. on Oct. 31, "Killer Pigs" features the origins of the deadly virus that swept Malaysia in 1999, and discovers a fatal addition of clueless farmers, feral hogs and hungry pigs.

Eric on tour

The popular Brit band Info Ever Getters Origin on Nov. 11, Ever Getters Commonwealth on Nov. 18, and Ever Getters Roots on Nov. 24.

'Rome' on DVD

The award-winning TV series, "Rome," is now on DVD. The set also revisits the birth and death of the mighty Roman Empire. The package also includes an interactive viewing guide prepared by the series historical consultant, Jonathan Stamp.

Banquets at Tin Hau

Throughout the month of October, Mandarin Oriental Manila's premier Chinese restaurant, Tin Hau, offers six more seasons to treat Diwali's sweet discounts stores. "Tin banquet."

The Ohio's opulence and sense of drama are matched by Tin Hau's new special banquets, enticingly named Jumbo, Lotus, Imperial, Phenix, Oriental and Mandarin. Diners also enjoy advantage discounts, select gourmet dishes. Call 750-8888, extension 3422.

'Let's Just Play' on Nov. 11

On Nov. 11, Mastercard on concert Our adidas Sports Group at Bonifacio Global City. Join in dream Play Camp for kids for "Let's Just Play" the champion's acclaimed pro-social grassroots initiative for children. The campaign is dedicated to the promotion of physical activities from sport and fitness.

From 2 to 6 p.m., you're will spend our adidas afternoons actively climbing, running, playing, eating and enjoying fun. It is to be happy, it is to conclude through healthy and other fun. From 2 to 4 p.m., Philadelphia will go dark to encourage kids to switch off their TV sets, get out of the house and play!

At the Adidas Sports Group, the event will be hosted by Noel dela Rosa and Hannah Bernardino, and will feature a Fun Field with marathon activities, including Philadelphia's very own "Play Dodge."

(more H)

Two takes on the life and legend of Audrey Hepburn

LOS ANGELES—THE season's book parade brings two biographical works on the late Audrey Hepburn. One is a frank, but sympathetic life story that tells of her extramarital affairs; the other a coffee-table book packed with memorabilia.

"Enchantress: The Life of Audrey Hepburn," by Hollywood biographer Donald Spoto, covers her life, her childhood under Nazi rule in Holland and Belgium, her inspiring work for UNICEF, and her death from cancer in 1994.

Holy

"The Audrey Hepburn Treasures," by Ellen Erwin and Jessica E. Diamond, is a hefty, beautifully designed volume with biographical segments, 400 photographs and envelopes containing copies of letters, memos, clippings and snapshots.

Speaking from his home in Denmark, Spoto said that four years ago, he took "a hard look" at writings about Hepburn—including five biographies, picture books, and studies about her movies.

"They were books about an Audrey" he said. "I think that alienates the subject from the reader; it doesn't bring people closer to the person in the enamel-glass window. Readers would be more likely to empathize with a human being who suffered, and was insecure, like other human beings."

"Enchantress" is the most moving in accounts of Hepburn's war years, when she and her family nearly starved to death, the witnessed random shootings of civilians by German soldiers, data dramatic arc her last six years, when she abandoned her career to save the world on behalf of sick and starving children.

HEPBURN: A biographer's dream—and nightmare.

Marriages

Spoto delves into her personal life, including a fling with William Holden, a married man, when they starred in "Sabrina" in 1954.

During her two marriages—to actor Mel Ferrer and to Italian psychiatrist Andrea Dotti—Spoto writes that she had passionate affairs with playwright Robert Anderson (who wrote the screenplay of 1959's "The Nun's Story"), and co-stars Albert Finney and James Garner.

"She desperately wanted to be loved; she didn't choose her husbands wisely," the author said. "Actresses often do that."

When Jack Warner bought the movie rights to "My Fair Lady" and cast Rex Harrison in opposite his Broadway role as Professor Higgins, he believed that he earned a film star to play the female lead. Or those Audrey Hepburn instead of Julie Andrews, who had originated the role of Eliza Doolittle.

"There was a deception by Warner," said Spoto. "He told Audrey, 'It's going to be your voice singing the songs.' But, Marni Nixon had been hired up to dub the songs from the start. Warner sabotaged Audrey's Oscar by not letting her sing. Who would ever let an actress in a musical who didn't sing her songs?"

Hepburn reacted to the slight from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences with "enormous grace," appearing at the awards to present Best Director's Oscar.

Treasure trove

"The Audrey Hepburn Treasures" resembles in size and weight a big city telephone book. It is indeed a treasure trove of a remarkable life—with numerous tidbits cloving from her Brussels birth through her London, New York and Hollywood years, and to her work with the children of African tribes.

Profits

Hepburn's first born son, Sean Hepburn Ferrer, was the instigator of the book, a portrait of his prolific, busy mother, and founder of the Audrey Hepburn Children's Fund. He holds the copyright, along with his half-brother, Luca Dotti.

The book was written by Ferrer and Diamond, officials of the fund. "They treasure mother's life better than anyone," Spoto remarked.

"My mother was not very good about keeping clothes. If they were outdated, she'd give them to an actor or cousins or museums," recalled Sean. "But, the kept all of her scripts, photos, and things that were meaningful to her."

Sean recalled "a strange thing" that happened six months before his mother's death: She spent six to eight weeks each day stand in the attic of her Swiss house, sifting through her collection of memorabilia. It was all entirely unlike her family found it after her death. In the early stages of "Treasures," Sean was asked to participate. He declined.

Classic

"My mother was a biographer's dream and nightmare," Sean said. "She was a dream, because she was a classic to write about—and everybody loves her. But, she was a nightmare because there are no scandals, quasi-scandals—she really pays stuff. Now do you notice a bit of sensationalism without the scandalous stuff?"

Sean had been aware of his mother's extramarital affairs, as Spoto's book would be no surprise to him. A question: Was he addicted? What was it like growing up as Audrey's son?

"My answer is something people don't expect: I have no idea," he replied. "I grew up in the fourteenth arrondissement, and she was a regular mom. She quit during movies when I wouldn't travel anymore (because of school)."

"In those days [he was born in 1960], there was no 300 or VHS. So Europe, we had one black-and-white channel. So we only knew that I 'remember' that she was an actress.

"Much later, I realized what she was a pretty good one! Only after she had passed away did I fully comprehend to what extent she had truly touched everyone." AP